WAYS OF WORKING

A. F. SCHAUFFLER

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Ways of Working

OR

HELPFUL HINTS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFICERS AND TEACHERS.

By

A. F. SCHAUFFLER, D. D.

FORMERLY SUPERINTENDENT OF OLIVET SUNDAY SCHOOL, NEW YORK.

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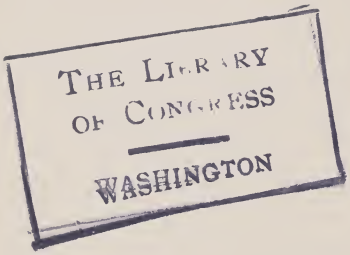

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WAYS OF WORKING.

PROLOGUE.

All the methods of work suggested in the following pages have been tried and approved by the author. There is nothing that is merely theoretical. Many things other than those alluded to have also been tried, and, having proved failures, have been laid aside. Nothing but what came through the fire of experience unscathed has been dwelt upon. Not all the methods recommended have been originated by the author. In fact, the land was ransacked during the time of his actual superintendency for helpful methods, and, wherever these were found, they were adopted. Sometimes they had to be adapted, as well as adopted, and this will probably be the case in many schools who try to take up with some of the reforms suggested. But if the suggestions given here serve to stimulate others in the line of advance the aim of the book will have been accomplished.

A. F. SCHAUFFLER.

New York City, May, 1895.

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WAYS OF WORKING.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

THE church is not a branch of the Sunday school, but the Sunday school is a branch of the church. It makes a great difference whether we start with right ideas with regard to this matter or with ideas which are wrong. There are Sunday schools in the land where officers and teachers act as though they were entirely independent of the church. In this they make a great mistake.

On the other hand, there are churches who treat their Sunday schools as no man would treat his own child. They allow the Sunday school teachers to raise the money for the current expenses of the school. They do not supply the needs of the school with regard to music books, lesson helps, library books, or any other of those needful paraphernalia of Sunday school work, and yet these churches expect the Sunday school to be subservient to the church officers. Not unnaturally the Sunday school workers feel that if they raise the "sinews of war," they are able to direct with regard to their expenditure, unassisted by church elders or deacons.

As a matter of fact, every church ought to provide for all the wants of its Sunday school with liberal hand. From the ranks of Sunday school scholars, the future membership of the church must largely come. Whether that membership is to be intelligent and well instructed in the Bible or not depends upon the work of the present generation of Sunday school teachers. These teachers ought therefore to be reinforced by every facility at our command, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege of the church to provide all these means of education.

If the church takes this attitude with regard to its school, it may be very sure that the school will look to it as its rightful guiding authority. There will be no conflict between teachers and elders, and no feelings of jealousy will arise.

The church has a perfect right to say who shall superintend its own school, and though it may not elect the superintendent and his assistant officers, it ought to have the power of nomination, or at least of veto.

The pastor of the church is (or at least should be) pastor of the Sunday school as well. It is a fatal mistake if his face is unfamiliar in the school, and his voice rarely heard. Few Sundays in the year should pass without his presence to cheer the heart of the teacher, and arouse the conscience of the scholar. That pastor whose school is loyal to him will find that from the ranks of the school he gets his very best workers.

In case of mission schools, where there is no church in the immediate vicinity to lean back upon, the school may be autonomous or self-governing, but just as soon as in such a case a church is formed out of converts of that school, the church ought to assume its rightful position of authority. It will not be a hindrance to the school, but a help to have this take place.

CHAPTER II.

THE SUPERINTENDENT.

IN speaking of the officers of the Sunday school, of course the superintendent must be placed first. No one person can so strongly influence a school for weal or woe as he. Many fail to realize this, and the result is unfortunate for their schools. Now, I would like to draw the picture of some superintendents whom I have met, and ask you to consider them carefully.

THE EASY-GOING SUPERINTENDENT. — Care sits lightly on this brother. He never lies awake half the night thinking of some way in which his school can be made better. It is already good enough for him, so he lets well enough alone. This man comes to the school in time, as a rule, but he is not much put out if he is a moment or two late.

When he does come, even if it is time for the services to commence, he stops near the door and has a chat with some teacher who, like himself, is not any too prompt. Then he wends his way to the platform, and rings the bell for order. While the classes are coming to order he is turning over the leaves of the hymn-book to find some appropriate hymn with which to begin. Of course the scholars have to wait for him,

and the chances are two to one that the hymn that he selects is not the best one in the book for that day's lesson. But that does not disturb him, for it is not a serious matter, after all.

Having thus set the keynote of easy-going ways, he carries the same all through the school exercises, and closes with about as much vim as he began. No plan, no method, no variety ever characterizes him on the platform. The school drawls along this year just about as it did last year, neither growing nor falling off, and to his mind all is serene.

The Fault-Finding Superintendent.—If the first brother had too much sugar in his composition, this one has too much lemon. Scolding seems natural to him, and one cannot help pitying his wife and children. As soon as the hymn is given out and one verse has been sung, he stops the pianist and scolds the school for not singing better. The result is never favorable, but that makes no difference to him; he scolds on just the same. If any of the classes strikes him as unusually unruly, he will call attention to that class, and scold them for their behavior.

When he gives out the notice for the teachers' meeting he will scold them for not attending better, thinking that in this way he will win them to a better observance of their duty. If there has been an unusual number of scholars tardy, he will make mention of that in a kind of "lemon squeezer" way, that has no effect on any one, unless it be to disgust them with him and his ways.

I do not say that he will scold at all these delinquents on the same day, but that in the course of a month nearly every one but himself will come in for some measure of public blame. If only this brother would some time give the teachers a chance to turn the tables on him, he would soon see how useless all this scolding from the platform is. To all such superintendents I would say, "Is not an ounce of praise better than a pound of blame?"

The Talkative Superintendent. — He is a good-natured kind of a man, whom nature has afflicted with the gift of speech. This gift he thinks it his duty to exercise, for is it not his talent? So he begins with exhorting all to sing every time a hymn is given out. Then he makes a "brief" introduction to the reading of the lesson by the school, and perhaps even comments on the verses as they are read. In giving out the notices, he dilates on them and repeats them *ad nauseam*. I heard him once give the notices for the annual picnic of the school as follows: —

"Our annual picnic will take place on Wednesday of next week, and will be held at —— Park. You can get there by the horse-cars or by the —— railway. Remember that the date is next week Wednesday. Those scholars who have baskets that they want to have taken to the park can be accommodated if they will bring them to the chapel on Wednesday at eight in the morning. Don't forget, — eight o'clock sharp. And you can go by horse-car or steam-car, as you

please. Bring all your friends. Tickets are only twenty-five cents apiece, and we want all to go on next Wednesday at eight o'clock sharp, and if you want, you can leave your baskets here, and they will be cared for."

This is enough to show how this one did it. In reality he was longer than I have indicated above, and all the school was wearied out with his ceaseless flow of language.

But the Gibraltar of the talkative superintendent is the review. In this he comes out strong, and his school always comes out weak. When it comes to the practical applications of the lesson, he gets to sermonizing; and, though the teachers see a good many places where he could very well stop, he does not seem to see them himself, but spins things out so that one is reminded of the poet's words, "Men may come, and men may go, but you go on forever."

THE SOFTLY SUPERINTENDENT. — He has nothing very positive about him. In fact, his whole manner seems apologetic. He has no confidence in himself, and, as a consequence, no one else has any confidence in him. When he mounts the platform the school is hardly aware that he is there. The bell is feebly rung, and the hymn so softly announced that not one third of the school can hear what the number is. The exercises are gone through with in a gentle way that savors more of weakness than of force, and the whole school feels much as a man might whose backbone was suddenly

withdrawn. If disorder arises, he remonstrates in a softly tone of voice, which of course has no effect on the rebels. He prays in such a tone of voice that you cannot hear what he is saying, and hardly know when he has said "Amen." Scholars have to guess at the notices that he whispers, for there is no ring in his voice. Bless this dear brother, how ever did he get the office that he holds? Better put a manly woman into the place than a womanly man like him. We hope that we may soon be able to say, "Peace be to his memory."

The Self-Conceited Superintendent. — He stands at the opposite extreme from the brother just mentioned. He knows more than seven men that can render a reason. He will never see this criticism, because he does not need helps or hints as to the management of his school. He knows it all already. No one can start a new idea in this school but what he magisterially snubs it, since it has not emanated from his brain. He frowns upon every reform that he has not started, and he starts but few. He is always telling "how they do things in our school," but never asks how they do them in other schools. Positive, narrow-minded, obstinate, vehement, this man will do better than the softly leader, but his school will never strike twelve. Five or six is as high as it will ever get.

Now Look at the Helpful Superintendent.— He never thinks that his duties are faithfully discharged when he has merely opened the school and closed it.

He realizes that almost any one with a clear head can do that. To pick out hymns, to offer a prayer, and to attend to the arrangement of classes without teachers,— this is but a small part of the duties of the office. There are other things that are equally helpful in the efficient management of the school. For example: —

1. A Cheerful Disposition is a great help to the teacher. The whole school will feel at once the influence of a bright, hopeful face turned toward it from the platform. On dreadfully stormy days in winter, or hot afternoons in summer, when every one is conscious of a sense of discomfort, new life may be infused into scholar and teacher by a few hearty words from the platform. To hear the superintendent say, "I am glad to see so many here to-day, in spite of the weather. Those who are here must be very much in earnest, and therefore I am sure that we shall have a good lesson," — I say, to hear such words at the opening of the school acts like a tonic on all present. They brace right up for their work.

2. A Wide-Awake Superintendent is a great help to the teacher. Most teachers have neither the time nor the ability to secure for themselves the best lesson helps. If they begin to examine the multitude of monthlies and quarterlies, they are apt to become confused. A wide-awake leader will help them greatly in this respect, and will do much of this work for them. He will also be constantly on the alert for new and

approved methods of working the library, of keeping the class records, or of collecting the weekly offerings for the Lord's treasury. Of course he will not discard any system *because* it is old, or adopt any one *because* it is new. At the same time he will not be afraid of new ideas, but will willingly adopt them, if they come sufficiently accredited.

3. A Readiness to Take Suggestions is a very helpful trait of character. Some men never smile on any plan unless it be a child of their own brain. Such men are apt to be childless. Under such a leader the teachers for a time present their suggestions in teachers' meetings and urge their adoption. But as months and years roll by, and they never find their suggestions heeded, they either leave the school or else grow discouraged and hold their peace. There are superintendents who are keeping their schools stationary because they will neither move on themselves nor allow any one else to go ahead. How one learns to abhor them! Now, no one man is as wise as all his teachers put together. Sometimes a new and inexperienced teacher has a new and good idea. His very newness to the school may give him a vantage ground, for he has not become used to the old and stupid way of doing things, and therefore naturally rebels against it.

4. Indomitable Perseverance is a magnificent trait of character. The superintendent should never give up because of discouragements. Of course, if he

is the man for the office, he has tried to have a teachers' meeting. He may have succeeded or he may have failed. But if he has failed once, that is no reason why he should fail again. And yet the easily discouraged superintendent is apt to put the blame on the teachers, or else upon the "peculiar circumstances" which surround the school. Now, it may be well at the start to assure such an one that there are no "peculiarly" discouraging circumstances in any school. In the city it is hard to get teachers to come out, because they have so many evening engagements, and because many ladies object to going out alone. In the country the distances are often great and the roads bad. *Everywhere there are difficulties.* But no difficulty should be so great as to hinder the maintenance of a teachers' meeting. It took Israel forty years to go a six weeks' journey, because they looked at the "peculiar difficulties" of the situation.

Last but not least, personal piety is a very helpful characteristic of a good superintendent. Nothing can atone for a lack of this. The school will not rise higher than its superintendent in this regard. A few words here may be helpful. In our religious lives we should be very careful to "take up the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes." Purity of speech should be cultivated. An evil story told in the store, or listened to, is such a fox. The reading of the Sunday newspapers is another fox that spoils many a vine which otherwise might bear tender fruit. Incessant joking with the teachers or in teachers' meeting

dampens the spiritual life greatly. Not that due cheerfulness is to be avoided, or a laugh to be frowned upon. But the spirit of banter and joke must be carefully guarded, or it will go too far. All these may be little foxes, but remember that it is just the little foxes that spoil the vines.

CHAPTER III.

THE SUPERINTENDENT. — CONTINUED.

SO important is this office that we must give to it another chapter, giving this time some positive suggestions, which we hope will be found helpful. A most important adjunct to the work of this officer may be found in

A SUPERINTENDENT'S CABINET. — Just as the President of the United States has a Cabinet to assist him and advise him in the formation of his plans, so the superintendent of a school should have a small body of earnest workers around him, to whom he looks for advice and support. No man can plan as wisely and work as effectively alone as he can when adequately supported. Moses with Aaron and Hur is more potent than Moses alone. Now, superintendents are apt to fall into one of two errors. They either inaugurate and carry out new plans without the hearty co-operation of their teachers and officers, or they broach all these plans before a large teachers' meeting before they have been thoroughly digested, and thus excite the hostility of some of those present. Either course makes it very difficult to carry to a successful issue the plans proposed.

A Middle Path is the best one to pursue. If the superintendent calls the officers of the school around him, and with them examines in detail all the interests of the school, he and they, together, will soon coincide as to the best method of procedure. Such examination and discussion cannot in the first instance be profitably carried on in the teachers' meeting for the following reasons: —

(*a*) It takes too much time. HOURS are necessary, and the teachers grow restive and hasten to a vote, to the detriment of the matter in hand.

(*b*) If the plans proposed involve any radical change, some opposition is sure to be aroused, which may be fatal to the scheme. At a later stage, and when the matter has been carefully considered by a smaller number of minds, it can be presented to the teachers with a much better chance of acceptance.

(*c*) Many plans which a superintendent may propose will be found not to be feasible. In an officers' meeting this will soon be ascertained, and the plan be laid aside. To have discussed this plan in the teachers' meeting would have been a great waste of time.

The Direct Advantages of a monthly cabinet meeting are many.

(*a*) It unifies the officers of the school. They learn to act as a body. They learn to lean upon and support each other.

(*b*) It stimulates each to the very best performance of his duty; for he feels that he has the sympathy of

and is watched by his fellow-workers. If, for example, the subject under discussion has been the best method of conducting the library, and, light having been obtained from various sources, a definite course of action has been marked out, the librarians cannot help feeling the stimulus of this co-operative council.

(*c*) In such a meeting reports from other successful schools may be presented and then discussed at length. In this way the best METHODS can be reached and adopted.

(*d*) After coming to a rational decision, the officers can then clearly present the whole question to the teachers without any needless and impracticable details, and *pull together for the adoption of their plans.*

But How Shall Topics for discussion be found and presented to the cabinet meeting? What are the defects in your school that call for a remedy? Here lies one of the difficulties of the situation. Many a superintendent knows that there is "something" the matter with his school, but what that "something" is he cannot tell. And until he finds this out all his efforts to make the school better will be of no avail. Now, as a suggestion that may be of use, I offer the following: —

Go and Visit Some Good School; but be very sure not to visit as some people do. They come into a popular school, sit down, and listen to the singing, hear the review, and go out again, asking no questions, taking no notes, learning practically nothing. The super-

intendent who visits any good school should have pencil and paper in hand, and use them incessantly. Everything praiseworthy, every new feature, every unexplained movement, every defect should be carefully noted down. No detail noticed should be too insignificant to be marked. After the school is closed, the visitor should, if possible, ask for an interview with the superintendent, or with some to whom this duty is delegated, and ask all manner of questions that are suggested by the notes that he has taken. Let him not fail to inquire, also, whether there be any points to which he has not alluded, which the school that he has visited considers important. In this way he can obtain much assistance and will ever after carry the impression that he has there gained with him. (Now, I hear some superintendent saying, "Oh, I can never leave my school!" Oh, yes, you can, and if you do and are able to bring back any good ideas, your absence for a Sunday will be better than your presence.)

After Having Taken the Notes above alluded to, let the superintendent take the first opportunity to sit down and *meditate*. Meditation is a grand thing, when you have something to meditate upon. Let him think over all that he has seen and heard, and begin to apply, in imagination, carefully and candidly, all these new plans to his own school. Not all of them will probably be applicable. But some of them will almost surely be useful. If any superintendent of an average school visits a first-rate school, and finds no ideas with

which to benefit his own school, *that man is unfit for his place.*

As a Specimen of Such Notes, let me give the following, which I took in a fair school, not fifty miles from Boston.

(*a*) "Half of each class faces away from the platform during the devotional exercises."

This could be remedied by opening the school with all the seats so turned as to face the platform. This would prevent disorder, arising from the almost necessary inattention of those scholars who cannot see the superintendent.

(*b*) "Not enough singing-books. Some boys' classes have none at all."

The remedy is simple. Get more books. Boys will not sing with no books. Scolding here will do no good, till you have done your duty and furnished them books.

(*c*) "In prayer, many scholars, both old and young, kept gazing around the room."

This is a common and great evil (especially in New England). No word should be uttered in prayer till all are reverently bowed so as to be, at least, in prayerful attitude.

(*d*) "Superintendent began to speak before perfect order was secured."

This is bad, and, what is more, needless. Wait till the school is in perfect order, and then begin. One stroke of the bell is enough to bring the school to order,

and if that does not, WAIT QUIETLY TILL THE SCHOOL DOES COME TO ORDER.

(*e*) "One small boy came in during prayer, and disturbed his whole class."

This was the fault of the superintendent, who should have had some one at the door to keep it closed while the school was praying.

(*f*) "The lesson of the day was not read by the school or to the school."

This was a mistake, as the lesson should *always* be read by the school before it goes into class exercise.

These were some of the notes that I jotted down at the time. They can be duplicated in many schools in Massachusetts, but the superintendents of those schools are not to this day aware of the difficulties in their work. Let them begin to use pencil and paper in this way, and they will soon *see*, as they have never done before.

Now Let the Superintendent, on the following Sunday, examine carefully his own school. Let him do with that as he did with the school that he visited the previous week, and let him write down carefully all that he sees that should be remedied. The record having been made, let him compare it with that of the school visited, and see how they compare. Not unlikely he will find some of the same faults reappearing. Let him make a note of them.

Then Let Him Call His Cabinet together and present the result of his investigations. Explain about

the school visited and its good and bad points. Show the defects that you have discovered in your own school and ask if something cannot be done to remedy these defects. Do not try to carry out too many reforms at once. Take the most important defect first. Then let the minor ones follow in due time. But do not stop in this work till all the remedies have been applied, and the school in this way has been lifted to a higher standard than it ever occupied before.

This Process May Have to be Repeated several times in the course of two or three years, but at last the superintendent will learn to detect deficiencies in his school without going outside of his own walls. In the meantime the school will have received much benefit from all the care taken of its interests, and will feel the pulse of a new energy beating in its veins.

So much for the superintendent and his cabinet.

Now for a Few Words about the superintendent and his teachers. He ought to know all his teachers in their homes. To do this is not a difficult matter, if he is a systematic man. For two or three calls a week will enable him to accomplish this. The advantage of this will be apparent when you realize that this "home calling" will give him the much needed opportunity to talk with each teacher about the specific work that he is doing in his class, and to find out the difficulties that the teacher encounters. This is a great gain both for superintendent and teacher, and

brings them close together in sympathy for their scholars.

Let Him Encourage the Teachers to bring to him their criticisms on the way in which the school is conducted, and also to tell him of their trials in their class work. This will lead them to consider him as their personal friend, and make them all the more ready to help him in his hard work of superintending the various interests of the school as a whole. He, too, can speak of his hopes and fears, and of his difficulties as well, and he will find in them sympathetic listeners. In this way he is helped, and they are made to understand a little the burdens that he is bearing.

Let Him at Times Pray with his teachers. This may not always be wise, but many times it will be exceedingly proper, and will not in any way be looked upon by the teacher as a usurpation of the office of the pastor. It is a pity if teacher and superintendent cannot thus have mutual sympathy and confidence in each other. It is a source of very great strength.

In This Way, too, the superintendent will find out the weakness of the individual teacher, and be able to help him and fit him to bear the responsibility that rests upon him. The fact is that nothing can take the place of this home acquaintance of superintendent and teacher.

In a Large School of, say, eight hundred or a thousand scholars, it will not be possible for the

superintendent to know personally all the scholars, especially if he has a mission school, in which changes among the scholars are rapid. But as far as possible he should know the scholars by name. This is especially true in the intermediate and senior departments, for in this way he can exert a powerful influence on their Christian lives. Every superintendent should at all events know all the scholars who are members of the church, and also all who think they have accepted the Saviour. These should be his especial care, for they are the lambs of the flock, and need food convenient for them. For lack of such care the young believers often go astray, and are lost to the church and to the side of the truth. Watch for conversions, but watch also for the growth of those who have been converted.

If You Have Carefully Read all that has been said above, it may be that your idea of the responsibility of your position as superintendent has grown largely. If this is so, I have in a measure accomplished my purpose in writing as I have done. Too many superintendents fail to realize what an important office they fill, and the result is that they do not FILL it at all. *No office in the church*, except only that of pastor, is so important. That of deacon or elder, as found in the ordinary church, cannot for a moment be compared with it. Magnify, therefore, your office, and remember that office is given for the sake, not of its honor, but of its service.

The superintendent is the servant of the teachers and scholars over whom he has been placed, and he, of all others, should subordinate himself to their welfare. "Let him that is chief among you be as he that doth serve" are the words of the GREAT SUPERINTENDENT of us all, and if we are to follow his footsteps this is the direction in which we shall tend. For this HE will give grace, if we ask for it, and in this he will give fruitage if we obey his precepts.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SUPERINTENDENT.—CONTINUED.

IN the last chapter I gave hints to superintendents about planning for their schools. The work mapped out pertained mostly to trying to remedy defects in the school, by consultation with what I called the superintendent's "cabinet." Now I propose to suggest some things that every superintendent should aim at in his work. The first of these is: —

COME EARLY TO THE SCHOOL. My idea is that in a large school the superintendent should be the first one in the school after the doors are opened. There are many advantages in this, as, for example, he can then see at a glance whether the room is in the order that it should be in. Sextons are not perfect, and many times the superintendent will find that the room is too hot or too cold, and can remedy the difficulty if he is on hand promptly. It makes a great difference with a school whether these things are carefully attended to, and, though the teachers and scholars will not realize how well they are cared for if all is right, they will soon find out if all is not right.

THEN, TOO, THE SUPERINTENDENT can have time to

greet his teachers as they arrive one by one, and if they know that he will be on hand promptly they will be much more likely to try and be prompt as well. A late superintendent makes late teachers and scholars. If the school be not too large, the superintendent can greet the scholars, too, by name, and he will find that this small attention gives him great power over the affection of his classes.

But it is not Enough for him to be on hand early. He should come as well prepared for all the exercises of the school as possible. All that can be foreseen in the way of details should have been cared for before he left his home. He should, for example, have a complete outline of his order of devotional services. (Never call these "opening exercises.") The hymns should all have been selected, and that, too, with due attention to the topic of the lesson for the day.

If he desires to have any one besides himself lead in prayer, he should have fixed on the one whom he intends to ask, and as soon as that teacher or officer arrives, he should ask him to be ready at the appointed time to lead the devotions of the school. No one should ever be asked suddenly to lead in prayer, for we need preparation of thought for this part of the service as well as for teaching a class.

The manner of conducting the platform review should have been settled on before the opening of the school, so that it need not trouble the mind or occupy the thoughts of the leader after he comes within the walls

of his school. All notices should have been put in order, and so arranged as not to confuse the school when they are given out. There is more in this last suggestion than some people think. I have heard a list of notices so given out that they left the mind in a confused state, and one hardly knew what had been said.

Begin Promptly. I was once in a school where I asked the secretary, "What time does the school open?" "*About* half-past two," was the reply. On waiting to see what "About half-past two" meant, I found that it meant a quarter to three. The scholars knew this, too, and they arrived in accordance with their estimate of what "About half-past two" was. If your school is advertised to open at two, then, as soon as the hour comes, BEGIN. Let the doors then be closed, and the school brought to order. Never mind whether there be two hundred present or only two. In this way you will inculcate promptitude on the part of teachers and scholars. In no other way can you do it as successfully.

But, After You Have Called the School to Order, do not begin the service till perfect quiet reigns. Quiet can be had in every school, if you will only wait for it. Calling aloud, "*Please come to order*," or repeated ringing of the bell, will avail nothing in this case. Wait quietly yourself, and in due time the school will recognize that you are waiting for them, and they will pay attention to your call.

The first time I tried this in a school where they had been accustomed to have the superintendent ring the bell two or three times, and then call for order with his voice, I waited *for five minutes*. The school heard the bell, but they had been taught that the first bell did not *really* mean order, but that it was preparatory to a second, and that to a third bell, and that these were preliminary to a call, and then it was time enough to come to order. So they paid no attention to my first bell, waiting for a second. When at length this did not sound, and time passed, they all at once, as if by a magic spell, looked to see why the second and third bells were not sounded. I then simply said, "We have lost five minutes waiting for order. Turn to Hymn 24."

The next Sunday they came to order much more rapidly, and in two or three weeks' time, as soon as the first and only bell struck, the whole school at once came to order.

Be Lively in the Conduct of all exercises of the school. The major part of your scholars are young, and they like to have things "go." If the leader is dull or slow, the minds of the children will outrun the action of the leader, and the school will tend to be disorderly. Even the older ones like life and push, and if the leader is quick and active, they will feel the impulse of his enthusiasm and will respond to it. Therefore be prompt in the giving out of the hymns, and as soon as the singing is done, be at once ready to go on with the next part of the programme, allowing no one to have

any time to think anything between the various parts of your exercises. There is nothing like this wideawakeness on the part of the leader, to give tone to the movements of a Sunday school.

Launch the Lesson Well. Many superintendents will not know what is meant by this expression. It means to so present the lesson, before it is read responsively by the school, that they shall have an intelligent idea of what they are about to read. This calls often for the connection between last Sunday's lesson and that for the day. Many of the scholars have not looked this up, and therefore have no intelligent idea of the relationship between the lessons. If this is given by the superintendent before the lesson is read, the help given to the school will be great. There are many ways in which the reading of the lesson may be made more profitable than it generally is.

For example, in a lesson about Joash, who was only seven years old when he began to reign, if, before the responsive reading of the lesson, the superintendent calls up to the platform a seven-year-old scholar, and asks the school what they would think of such a child being President of the United States, and then says, "We are now going to read about a king no older than this child," all the school will read with more of interest the story for the day. Do you see now what I mean by "launching" the lesson? Any such little device will help the whole school, and add freshness to the whole study of the Word of God.

As to the Notices, it makes little difference where they come in. But wherever they do come in, they should be clearly given, and in such order as to help the memory of the school. They need not be repeated, for if we get into the habit of repeating them, the school will not pay attention the first time. Give all notices once, and clearly, and then show the scholars that you expect them to pay attention, and to remember what has been said from the platform.

After the School Has Gone into Class Exercise, some one should keep his eye on the school all the time. This is especially true in all large schools, particularly if they are mission schools. It has a most wholesome influence on teacher and scholar to feel that a responsible person is all the time on the lookout for the welfare of the school. If there is any danger of unruliness on the part of any scholars, it is in this way often checked before it has gone too far. Or, if a good teacher is in any trouble with a refractory scholar, the eye of the superintendent will detect the difficulty, and go to the aid of the teacher at once. I know what I am speaking about in this regard, as I have frequently assisted some struggling teacher to come out victorious, instead of leaving her to battle alone, and perhaps be defeated.

Visitors Will Come to any large school that has achieved a reputation. These persons are not always agreeable, but they have rights, and should be properly

cared for. In very large schools, like "Bethany" in Philadelphia, the superintendent cannot see them all personally, but in smaller schools this is perfectly possible. Then he should do it, for visitors feel the courtesy of the effort, and are grateful. He may explain to them the working of the school, and what he considers its strong points, so that they may go away with a clear understanding of what the aim of the leaders of the school is. In this way much good may be done to those who are really anxious to know how to improve their own schools.

When the Time for Class Teaching has come to an end, let the school be called to order as promptly as it was in the beginning. In all school work this matter of promptitude is one of great importance. The teachers should be trained to pay attention to the summons from the platform at once, and close their lessons. But as they cannot do this at a moment's notice, there should be a warning bell, to show that in five minutes the school is expected to be ready for the review. Then, as soon as the second bell sounds, there should be immediate silence. Some may say that to gain this so rapidly is not possible. I reply it is possible, for I have seen it done, year in and year out, in a mission school. It only depends on the determination of the leader as to whether he shall have it or not. Quiet determination will accomplish wonders in this line, and the result will be that all will be grateful to the superintendent for having gained such discipline.

The Platform Review is a very necessary part of the school exercise. It is important, because there are in every school some teachers who have not done by the lesson as well as they should have done, and in those classes the scholars have not had as good a chance with the lesson as they should have had. Then, in all classes the lesson will be more deeply fixed if it is reviewed. Remember, repetition is what FIXES truth. To many superintendents the platform review is a bugbear, and, indeed, in the way in which it is sometimes conducted, it is also a bugbear to the school. There are a few principles which should always govern every review.

First, it should be SHORT. I say SHORT. If this rule is rigidly adhered to, it will never be stupid. Ten minutes is TOO LONG for most men to review the school in. Make it seven, and you will be nearer the mark. Second, it should be by question and answer. The questions should be plain, and such as can be answered by single words, if possible, or by very short sentences at the most. As an example, take a lesson on Lazarus. Let the questions be such as the following: Where did Lazarus live? What were the names of his two sisters? Which of the sisters first went to meet Jesus? Who were in the house with Mary? When she went out, what did her friends say? Give the shortest verse in this lesson. Any school that is at all accustomed to answer will give the proper replies to such questions as these.

But if you ask long and intricate questions, like,

"Why did Jesus not go to Bethany as soon as he was called?" you will not get good replies, and the effect on the school will be to discourage them from trying to answer. When you come to the practical application of the most important truth of the lesson, let that be brief and to the point. Then let some one lead in prayer, asking that the school may have the grace to practise what it has this day learned.

Every School Should Close in as orderly a way as that in which it opened. There should be no rushing out pell-mell. This can be accomplished as easily as can be the securing of order at the start. Let the teachers be instructed to restrain their scholars a little, and let the school close quietly, but solemnly, and all the rest will take care of itself. I have seen schools rush out like a band of wild Indians, but that is altogether the fault, not of the children, *but of the leaders*. As soon as the leaders understand this, and begin to take active measures to secure a change, the school will feel the impulse of the movement, and respond.

After the School Closes many superintendents leave at once, and start for home. This is an evil. There are many of the teachers, and not unlikely some of the scholars, who would like to see him on matters of real importance. In fact, if it is a school of any size, if there are no persons who have any business with the superintendent, it proves that he is not the right kind of a man. He has not so acted as to *draw*

them toward himself, or else he has not aroused his co-workers to that pitch of enthusiasm in their work to which they should have attained.

The well-instructed superintendent remains after the school has closed until there are no more persons who wish to see him. It is a great misfortune, for example, if a teacher wants to communicate to him some news about a thoughtful scholar, to have him off and away before that teacher can reach the desk. At times I have had teachers, who, by reason of poor success in teaching a hard lesson, have become discouraged, and have come to the platform, after the school was over, to present their resignations. Kind sympathy has caused them to change their minds, and in this way the teacher has been saved to the school. If, however, that teacher had been allowed to go home without sympathy or friendly counsel, you would have had a letter in the course of the week announcing his resignation, and then it would have been much harder to secure a change of determination.

There are many minute things about which teacher or scholar want advice, and for which they will come to their leader, if he will only give them a chance. To refuse this is to lose a great opportunity to draw your school closer to yourself. This no wise superintendent will lose, for the more close the relation between himself and his teachers and scholars, the more good he can accomplish in his school. Hand and glove should not be closer together than leader and led in this blessed work.

If the Superintendent Has Done All that we have indicated above, he may go home happy, and be sure that his teachers will be satisfied with the way in which he has tried to help them in their work. They will realize that they have a man at the head of the school whom it is well to follow, and will give him their full confidence.

But His Work for That Day is not yet quite over. After he reaches his home, he would do well to sit down, and, before he has cooled off, ask himself where he has made any mistakes. Let him review the work and see if he carried out all his plans as he made them before he went to the school. If not, let him ask if he improved on them, or whether the failure to do as he had planned was a mistake. In this way he can help himself for the better performance of his duties the next week.

If he has a critical wife, let him ask her counsel, and court her kindly criticisms, for they will in the main be just, and, if they err, will certainly not err on the side of needless fault-finding. A good wife is from the Lord, and can be of much assistance to her husband in such matters. The poet says,

> "Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
> To see oursels as ithers see us."

This wish may be realized in the way indicated above, to the great advantage of both superintendent and school.

He who never makes the same mistake twice will make good progress. It is those who make the same blunder over and over again who stick in their own tracks. Be you not like one of those who never change their course of action simply because they never make any progress in their ideals of what is the best thing to be done.

CHAPTER V.

THE TEACHERS' MEETING.

MUCH good work can be done in the Sunday school without a teachers' meeting, but by no means such good work as can be done with the aid of a weekly meeting for the study of the lesson. No topic in conventions is more interesting than that of how to conduct these meetings, and, as our theme for this chapter, I shall take up this question, and try to say some helpful things on it.

THE TEACHERS' MEETING IS EXCEEDINGLY IMPORTANT. No one who has ever tried and succeeded will deny this. In fact, those who are the most strenuous advocates of this meeting are those who have paid the most attention to it. Any man who decries it shows by his very act that he has no idea of its true value. Ask the most successful superintendents in the land what they think of it, and with one voice they will bear witness to its indispensable character.

We need waste no more space on this question, but shall get to work at once to show how such a meeting may be made a success. This I will do by first showing what a teachers' meeting should not be, and, second, by showing what it should be. Finally, I will consider

some of the difficulties that are in the way of making it a complete success.

The Teachers' Meeting Should Not be a Debating Society. There is always danger of this. In every school there are some men (and women, too) who are argumentatively inclined. As soon as they strike any questions that will bear discussion they grow combative. The matter of the Divine Decrees and Free Will is a fruitful theme with them, and they will gladly spend a whole evening tearing that question to tatters. The trouble is that at the same time they tear the meeting to tatters as well.

It matters not what the question in debate is, if the debaters are allowed to have their own way they will ruin any meeting; for the majority of the teachers have come to the class, not for discussion, but for help on how to handle their classes on the following Sunday. If such discussions are allowed to be carried on, this class of teachers will soon tire of the meeting and will stay away. Check this evil before it has choked your meeting. Talk with the combative brethren before the meeting, in private, and ask them not to take the time of the teachers with their unpractical questions. If they will not heed such gentle admonition, then stop them by force, if necessary.

The Teachers' Meeting Must Not be a Lecture. When the pastor takes the charge of the meeting, it is apt to develop into a mere lecture. This

is better than nothing, but is evil none the less. One way in which pastors are apt to fall into this mistake is because they are restive under the suggestions of their teachers and combat them. Then the teachers hold their peace, and leave the pastor to go on undisturbed with his talk. Into this trap he falls all the more easily because of the habit formed in the pulpit of continuous discourse. *But it is a grave mistake.* It begets on the part of the hearers an inert frame of mind, and they listen, but hear not. It would surprise many of these teachers'-meeting lecturers, if they could see how little real help they are to their teachers, and how little the average teacher carries away from such a meeting.

THE TEACHERS' MEETING MUST NOT BE A SOCIAL CLUB. This sometimes happens. The young men and maidens gather, and are full of their fun. They begin to pass jokes and smart sayings, and are filled with the spirit of banter. This is all well enough in its way, and at the proper time, but it will kill any teachers' meeting in the long run. The serious teachers will weary of it, and will show their feelings by staying away. There is a time for everything under the sun, and the teachers' meeting in not the time for polite skylarking. At the same time

THE TEACHERS' MEETING MUST NOT BE DULL. Dulness is an unpardonable sin in many things besides teachers' meeting. I have seen the leader sit in his chair before the meeting began, and by his solemnity

throw a chill over each teacher as he came into the room, so that by the time the meeting began you would have thought that they had assembled for a funeral, and not for the study of the most cheerful book in the world.

If you cut out religion from this world, there is nothing left that is truly bright, and why a teachers' meeting should ever be a dull thing I cannot understand. "There is a difference between staring and stark mad"; and so there is a difference between a frivolous meeting and one that is as stupid as an owl. Brighten up, brother, and put a little life into your meeting, so that your teachers shall be attracted to it by its good cheer. Do not be afraid of a laugh, for it is sometimes the best of medicines.

The Teachers' Meeting Should Not be the Tail to Another Meeting. (I know that this is sometimes necessary, but it is an evil.) If possible, it should have an evening all to itself. I should tell my teachers, if I were their pastor, that, if they could attend only one meeting in the week, they should omit the prayer meeting and be at the teachers' meeting. For to them it is far more important than any other meeting can be. Give a whole evening to this exercise, and then you will exalt it to its proper importance. There will be no feeling of hurry because of the lateness of the hour, and you will have time to go over the lesson with proper care. There are other things to be done in the meeting besides the study of the lesson, as we shall

see presently, and for these there is no time if the meeting be held after another meeting of an hour in length. Besides, after another meeting, the teachers are a little tired, and cannot give good attention to the topic in hand.

So much for what a teachers' meeting should not be. I could say some more things along this line, but this will suffice for the present. If I spin my yarn too long, I am afraid that teachers will not read it, and I had rather write ten words that will be read than a hundred that go a-begging for a reader. Now we will pass on to see what a teachers' meeting should be. And I remark in the first place that

THE TEACHERS' MEETING IS ONE FOR THE STUDY OF THE LESSON. In theory, all teachers ought to come to the meeting with the lesson already prepared, at least, in its outline facts. But as a matter of fact most teachers do not find time for this, and for that reason I say the meeting must take up the lesson from the very beginning, and the leader see to it that the teachers know the lesson facts. This is not hard work, provided the leader himself knows them. This drawing out of the facts of the lesson should be by question and answer, for that always was and still is *the best* of methods. At the same time the leader must exercise very great wisdom in putting his questions, so as not to frighten the timid teacher.

Teachers have often come to me and promised to attend the meeting on condition that I would not ask

them any questions. This I always agreed to, saying that I would give them fair warning before asking any, even the simplest question. But by degrees, as they gained confidence and became accustomed to the way of working, I found that it was not difficult to lead them out of their shyness, and then they took part as did their comrades.

In this matter of question and answer the following points are always to be brought out. The place, where? The time, when? The persons, who? The events, what? And the practical application, what then? If these are well discussed, and the answers made plain, much has been done to help the average teacher in his preparation.

In this illustrations are to be sought for and given, and in this, as in all the study, the teachers must be encouraged to take part. It is the duty of the teacher to *give* as well as *get*, and the leader must have the skill to make the teachers give out of their stores. The leader will know when to add, and when to correct gently what is mistaken, and when to bring the matters to a practical conclusion. That is what he is leader for. It may be hard at the first, but with practice it becomes comparatively easy.

The Teachers' Meeting Should be Devotional. It is a great mistake to make it entirely intellectual. The work that teachers have in hand has its intensely devotional side, and without much prayer will not succeed. So opportunity should be given for requests

for prayer, and for a statement of difficulties and encouragements, after which the meeting can unite intelligently in prayer or in thanksgiving. This gives warmth to the gathering, and satisfies some to whom a merely intellectual treat would be like a cold dinner. Burdens that are borne by sympathizing friends to the throne of grace become lighter by that very act, and are more easily carried. Let there never be less than two prayers, and often more. Let the prayers be short, strong, and specific, not running over all the world and all time, but for that which just at present lies nearest the hearts of the teachers. Teachers should be strongly encouraged to bring special cases and ask for prayer in their behalf. In this way this part of the meeting becomes most delightful.

The Teachers' Meeting Should Discuss Plans for the improvement of the school. Only in this way can the school be intelligently worked. If the superintendent does everything himself, without consultation and discussion, he makes a great mistake. His teachers will give him an unintelligent support, and at times no support at all. They do not fully understand the reason why he wants any change, and therefore are not themselves really ready for the change. At the same time the superintendent will welcome suggestion from the teachers for the improvement of the ways of working, and in this way the school will make advance.

That school that has not for two years made any

change in its ways of working has fallen into a rut, and, what is worse, does not know it. But if plans are discussed, for example, for grading of the school, or for a new method of giving out the library books, and the teachers have adopted them, they will then be able to carry them out with unanimity and enthusiasm.

As suggestions toward this matter of discussion, let me ask a few questions right here.

Is your library in as good a condition as it should be in? If not, how can it be improved?

How is your music? Have you enough books so that every scholar can have one to himself? Are the books "sung out"? How can you have better singing?

Is your school really orderly? Or have you late-comers streaming in while you are praying or reading the lesson? Do the scholars and teachers read responsively with enthusiasm, or is that part of the service but half-hearted at the best? Where can you improve in these matters?

Have you any blackboard? If not, why not? Why do all the best schools have them and use them all the time? Is your school better than the best, that you consider them useless?

Are all your classes graded? If not, is it best to leave them as they are? If they should be graded, what is the best system of grading?

Such matters as these should be discussed in the teachers' meeting, not necessarily every week, but at least once a month, or once a quarter. In this way, and *only* in this way, will your school make progress.

Now, if your teachers' meeting does its work in the way suggested above, it will be a power for good, and the whole school will feel the impulse of its counsel and enthusiasm.

Now for a few difficulties that are often mentioned in connection with the teachers' meeting.

First Difficulty. *We cannot get all our teachers to come.* Well, what of that? It is not to be expected. There are always some teachers who really cannot come by reason of household cares or other good hindrances. But that does not interfere with those who can come. Then there are (unfortunately) in every school some teachers who do not in any way realize the importance of such a meeting, and they stay away. But there are always those who want the help that such a gathering affords, and for their sakes it is well worth the while to have a meeting.

If I had a school I should have a teachers' meeting if only four teachers came, and should try to make it so helpful that the others would by and by feel that they could not afford to be absent. Besides, much can be done by patient and personal work in persuading those teachers to come who at first stay away.

Second Difficulty. *We have no time for such a meeting.* Pardon me, but that is not true. If you want it intensely enough you will find time for it. If the pastor or the superintendent feels that the meeting for the study of the lesson is of more importance to the

teachers than any other meeting of the week, they will soon make time for it. Any school can be worked up to this idea, so that the teachers will as soon think of giving up the school session as giving up the preparation meeting. I have always found that I can have anything reasonable in my school provided I WANT IT WITH ALL MY HEART. But if I am half-hearted in the matter, I am apt to fail of reaching the goal aimed at.

THIRD DIFFICULTY. (This is felt in country districts.) *The teachers live so far away* that it is not possible for them to come; and, besides, the roads are bad and dark. Well, all the teachers are not far from the center, and if you take those who are near by you can still have your weekly meeting. When I had a country charge, and this was true, I had *two* meetings every week, one on an evening, and the other at the nooning, when those who lived far away could still have their meeting before the session of the school. It was hard for me, but I never said that it was easy to have such a meeting. It was hard, but what of that? If any man is afraid of hard work he had better go to bed and stay there.

FOURTH DIFFICULTY. (This is felt in the city.) *Ladies do not like to go out at night alone.* Well, it is possible to get teacher-escorts for them from the male force of teachers. It takes a little arrangement and forethought, but so do all good things. And even if a few really cannot come, as I have said before, that does

not prevent others from attending. It is not necessary to have all the teachers present or even a majority. Four earnest teachers can have a very good meeting. I have for fourteen years conducted a teachers' meeting in the city, and that in a bad part of the town, but we never thought of giving it up on that account. We went ahead, and found that it did us a world of good. In fact, I cannot conceive of difficulties that would hinder me from sustaining a meeting, year in and year out.

Fifth Difficulty. (There are some who think that this settles the question.) *WE TRIED IT ONCE AND IT FAILED.* That does not prove that it would fail if you tried it again.

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again."

It may be that you fell into some of the mistakes that I have tried to guard you against above, and that if this time you were to steer clear of them you would succeed. A thing worth having is worth trying for many times. If you had in life given up everything that did not succeed the first time, how many things you would have missed!

I well know that to learn to conduct a successful teachers' meeting is not an easy matter, but I also know that when you do succeed you have accomplished a great thing. To my brethren in the ministry I would say that it is much harder to manage a good teachers' meeting than to conduct a successful prayer meeting. But it can be done, and the power of the minister who

has such a meeting is more than doubled in his school and church.

As a rule in most churches, the pastor is the man upon whom must fall the work of the teachers' meeting, and it is ten thousand pities that the theological seminaries do not give instruction along this line of work. They had better give fewer lectures on the dry bones of church history and doctrines, dead a thousand years ago, and more on the living work of a practical pastor. But I am afraid that that is past praying for, because there is not one professor in ten who could do anything but kill a teachers' meeting dead. However, what has not been learned in the seminary can be learned outside of its walls, and it will pay every minister to learn how to have a successful meeting in his parish.

CHAPTER VI.

PRIVATE LESSON STUDY.

NOT many teachers can enjoy the advantages of a teachers' meeting, and even those who can will admit that it cannot take the place of private study of the lesson week by week. As a help in the right direction let me suggest the following: —

GET THE BEST LESSON HELPS. Of such helps there is a large number, and, as we might expect, some are better than others. The intelligent worker will try and select those that are the most practical, and will subscribe for them. Never mind whether they are denominational or not, for what we want to reach is the very best method of teaching the Word of God to our scholars. If you are a Congregationalist, and the Methodists have better helps than your own denomination, take the latter. In this selection of helps, remember that what was best last year may not be best this year. For writers are changed from time to time, and the old are at times better than those who take their places. Watch for changes, such as are to be expected, and change with them, when they are to your advantage.

NEVER MIND THE OUTCRY against helps as

"crutches." You will often hear this at conventions. Generally it comes from ministers who dare not enter their pulpits without a finished manuscript, and yet these same men cry out against lesson helps as "crutches." Pray, what do they use themselves when they preach? A crutch is a good thing when I am lame. Most teachers are lame, and confess it freely. For those let there be "crutches," so that they may walk the better. No man is as wise as all his fellowmen together, and what the best men say about the lesson must be known to any teacher who would be fitted to do his work well. Look out for the best, and then use it, whatever anybody may say.

Begin Your Lesson Study Early in the week. Some teachers put off all preparation until Saturday, and some even till Sunday morning. All this is evil. The plea that they are very busy is not a good plea, for it takes no longer to study the lesson on one day than on another. The best time to begin the study of the lesson for the following week is on the Sunday after you have taught the lesson for the day. It is not necessary to give much time to it then, but it is well to commence and get the text well in mind. This will give you the material to think over at odd times during the week. Of such odd times, even the most busy man has more than he suspects. In such odd times he will get golden thoughts that will not come to him in the hurry of a late preparation. Every minister will bear witness to the fact that some of his best thoughts come to him at "odd times."

Let the First Thing be a careful reading of the text. This should be done prayerfully, and without any reference to "helps." Let the teacher see to it at this time that he thoroughly understands the text, and so masters the story (if there be one) that he could tell it again in all its details. This is not so easy a matter as many suppose. Do not take it for granted that you can do this until you have tried it. Then you may rest for awhile and trust your mind to put it into shape, so that it shall become part and parcel of your mental furniture.

Be Familiar with the Maps which deal with the geography of all lessons. The location of Jerusalem, Babylon, Haran, Bethel, Athens, Philippi should be as familiar to you as that of Boston, New York, Washington, and Chicago. Every lesson help has such maps, and ignorance here is utterly inexcusable. If you can so familiarize yourself with the geography of Bible lands as to be able to draw outline maps of the countries spoken of, you will find it a great power in teaching. Ignorance never gives power, but knowledge is potent for good.

Know the Surroundings of your lessons. If the lesson is one about Abraham, be so familiar with his surroundings that at once you see tents, camels, caravans, flocks, herds, wells being dug. Pastoral life will then dominate the mental picture that you will form, and the whole will become instinct with life.

If you are teaching about Paul, the scene will at once change, and you will be in great cities. Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, with all their splendid architectural glories, will form the background of all the scenes. If it be Moses at the court of Pharaoh, Egyptian temples and pyramids will abound. If Moses in the desert is the theme, this will all vanish, and in its place we shall have sands, mountains, sheep, loneliness, all stretching out for the dreary space of forty years.

If Nehemiah comes up for consideration, we shall at once see a ruined city and a discouraged people. Soon, however, we shall see walls arising, gates being set up, and shall hear the glad shouts of those who are rejoicing in presperity returning. This is what I mean by being familiar with the surroundings of each lesson. It will give intensity to all the events of which we learn, and will help us to make them vivid to our classes. Do you see?

Answer Five Questions. — WHERE? This will deal with the geography of the lesson. If it be an epistle or a prophecy, it will tell you in what land the writer was, and in what land the ones to whom he wrote were living. For example, the epistle to Timothy is more easily understood when I know that it was written from Rome, and was addressed to one living in luxurious Ephesus. The mental picture that you have of the Where will strongly influence all your handling of the lesson story.

WHEN? This deals with the chronology of the lesson, and is an important factor in the right handling of the Word. Patriarchal times differ much from prophetic days, and these very largely from those of apostolic periods. My When will color much the lessons that I may have to deduce from the text. For example, a lie in patriarchal times, when the light enjoyed was dim, will not be so strongly condemned by me as will the lie of Ananias and Sapphira, who had much more light. Many mistakes are made in teaching, because of the failure to recognize this element of dates and surroundings.

WHO? This question answered will bring out the persons with whom the lessons deals. They are the actors in the scenes that we are to present to our scholars. Here we shall find great variety, for the Word presents to us patriarchs, prophets, kings, beggars, wise men, fools, rich, poor, proud, humble, — one vast procession of "all sorts and conditions of men." Some good, some bad, some inspired, others uninspired, they walk before us a vast procession with features clearly depicted by inspired writers, and all for our profit and instruction. Get these well in mind, and be able to answer any question that pertains to the actors in the lessons that you teach.

WHAT? This question deals with the events of the lesson. What did the men of whom we have just spoken do or say? Actors must act, and the more

vividly we see them as they are on the stage of human history, the better will our scholars see them, and the more interesting will be our teaching. What you see you can make others see; but what is obscure to you will be so to them.

WHAT THEN? This deals with the practical application of the lesson. These actors are all dead, and have been for many centuries. We read of their actions and study their utterances. What then? What is there that we may learn from their mistakes or their successes? Here the teacher will have to search out the underlying principles that are constant in their application to all men everywhere. Was Solomon wise in his talk and foolish in his walk? Well, there are to-day many Solomons. They talk well, and they know much, but their lives are full of sin. Wise talk did not save the king, and it will not save you. Was David peculiarly godly in his youth, and was it in his old age that he fell into his grievous sins? Well, the same is true to-day. You are not safe because you have been a Christian for twenty years. Old men sin as well as young, and their sins are all the worse on that account. This will illustrate what I mean by the What Then?

SELECT MAIN POINTS for application. There are many lessons that teem with salient points, but the time of the teacher is limited to (say) half an hour. He cannot deal wisely with them all. If he tries, he will only leave a confused impression on the minds of

his scholars. One good point deeply impressed is better than three vaguely presented. It is what your scholar remembers, not what he hears only, that will do him good. If you have a class of boys, you will pick out truths for their guidance varying from those that you might select if you were teaching an adult Bible class. A mother's class requires very different applications of the truth from a class of primary children. You see what I mean?

After having gone over the lesson to select its various practical teachings, make another selection to apply more especially to the *individual* scholars under your care. I would even go so far as to say that at times I would pick out some truth with especial reference to some one scholar. In this way we learn to be *specific*. But the more specific I am, the more likely I am to help some one. When I call a doctor to my bedside I want him to be specific, and not to give me any medicine on "*general principles*." Treat your scholars in the same way as far as possible.

Look Out for Illustrations. A story that will illustrate the point that you wish to make is twice as good as an argument. Half the class will not listen to an argument, while the dullest scholar pricks up his ears as soon as he hears that you are telling a story. I have seen listless congregations aroused as soon as the preacher began to tell a story, and often the part of the sermon that is best remembered (if, indeed, not the only part) is the telling story.

Take these illustrations, if possible, out of your own experience. They are for you better than any stories that you could get from encyclopædias of illustration. I never could use these. They seem to me like mummies, compared with events that I myself have witnessed. Look out in daily life for such illustrations. They are to be found on every hand. The simplest are the best, — things that you see on the cars or on the street. These are full of power. The Saviour's illustrations were of this nature. Leaven, which he had seen his mother take and use, he afterwards used to illustrate the workings of the kingdom of God. Children playing in the market-place, the sower with his seed, the fisherman with his nets, — such were the illustrations that he used. Be like him, and, like him, you will have power in your teaching.

Look for Object Lessons. Not every lesson can be illustrated by objects, but many can, and in these object teachings there is very great power. An object of almost any sort, taken into the class, will command the attention of even the most careless scholar. For example, if the lesson be on the resurrection, let the teacher take some flower-seed into the class, and use it as Paul indicates in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians.

To illustrate the unseen but not unfelt power of the Holy Spirit, the teacher may well make use of a magnet, whose unseen power is felt by every particle of iron with which it comes in contact. To make clear the blinding nature of sin, a veil may be used, which,

placed over the eyes, obscures the vision. So a lie told obscures the spiritual vision of every child, and as a veil doubled and trebled at last shuts out all light, so a lie told and told again will at last make a boy totally blind to all truth. A handkerchief soiled easily, but not so easily cleansed, will set forth the ease with which a soul is marred by sin, but with difficulty purified.

A watch with all its complicated parts will stand for the human frame, so complex in all its parts, and will set forth the wisdom of God in making so wonderful a thing as a human body. As we care for the watch, so we should care for our bodies, and minds, and souls. As we would not abuse a fine watch, so we should not abuse our frames, which are of more value than twenty watches. In such ways the teacher should be on the lookout for object lessons with which to enforce the truth that may be found in any lesson.

Having Thus Prepared the lesson, let the teacher now think of how he will teach it. To do this properly, it will be needful to ask questions of the scholars, for a lesson in which the scholar is asked no question is a lecture, and not a properly taught Sunday school lesson. But on the asking of the right kind of question a great deal depends. Therefore, let the teacher, with the class in mind, prepare a list of questions *beforehand*, suited to the capacity of the members of the class. This will help the teacher himself in the clarification of that which he proposes to present to the class.

Most of the questions that are asked should be of the

very simplest kind, so as to encourage the scholars to give ready answers. Hard questions, while they may suit the teacher, will not suit the scholar, and he is the one most to be consulted. It will not be necessary for all the questions thus prepared to be actually asked, for the trend of the lesson may be affected by some unforeseen circumstance. But it is very sure that if no such questions are prepared the lesson will not go so well as it will with due preparation.

Have a Clear Outline of these points that you wish to make written out on paper. I find this the greatest possible help to clearness of teaching. A few words will suffice for this, and the fewer the better. If the story be a Christmas one, and the lesson be from the account by Matthew, let the outline be "Glad tidings — Sad tidings." They were glad tidings to the shepherds and to all believers, and sad tidings to Herod and all self-seekers. So to-day they are the same, according as men are ready to receive them or reject them.

If the lesson is Peter's fall, make it run as follows. Peter the Apostle, proud, boastful, lying, swearing, repenting, restored. If the prodigal son be the theme, you can fasten it in the minds of your scholars by the words, "A son rebellious, riotous, ruined, reflecting, repenting, returning, restored, rejoicing." Boil down the statement of your points to the last degree of brevity, both for your own sake and for that of those whom you are to teach. In this way clearness and ease of remembering are secured.

In All This be Much in Prayer. — God alone can give us that truth that shall reach the hearts of our scholars, and all work that has not his blessing on it will be vain. The word is like seed, and prayer is like the early and later rain that waters the seed, and without which the seed will come to nothing. Yet there are many teachers who study, and even try to teach their classes, without special prayer. This is folly, and worse than folly. A lesson steeped in prayer will be sure to do good, while we have no right to expect anything good from truth taught without the blessing of its Author.

This is one reason why there is so much sowing of the seed, and so little reaping of harvest. Remember that we have the scholars in that exact time of life when we may most confidently expect a harvest. If we do not get it in their youth, when can we expect to gather it in? Must we wait till they are old in sin before they are converted? This is one of the heresies that is most harmful, and yet there are many teachers who hardly expect to have conversions among their scholars till they are well advanced in years. No, no; in childhood we may confidently expect them to give their hearts to the blessed Lord, if we teach them aright.

So Much for Specific Directions. — Now for a few general remarks. Every teacher should have a general knowledge of the Word beyond that demanded by the study of those portions that fall to our lot each week. There are great and important periods of Bible

history with which we should all be very familiar. They are the central points, and from them we may draw many illustrations. Then there are certain great personages with whose lives we should be well acquainted.

With regard to the periods spoken of, I will instance as examples, *The Patriarchal Period*. The general manner of life of the patriarchs should be familiar to us. The revelations that God made to them should be matters of intimate knowledge. Another very important period is that of *The Exodus*. Here God was giving the law, and was amalgamating for himself a people. All that pertains to that period is of the utmost importance to the teacher of God's Word. Then the *Period of Revival* under Elijah and Elisha is very significant. *The Restoration* under Nehemiah is highly interesting and full of lessons for the Christian worker. Then, of course, the period of *our Lord's life* is one of the utmost importance, with which no one can be too well acquainted. And finally the period of the *Foundation of the Christian Church* should receive special study.

Finally, After You Have Taught a Lesson, review it on getting home, to see where you have made any mistakes. We often make a plan that seems to us good before we meet the class, but which on trial is not as good as we had hoped it would be. To ascertain where the weak spot was, go over the teaching at leisure, and ascertain what was redundant or deficient.

This will help in all future preparations of lessons. By mistakes corrected, the best of men have reached perfection; whereas, by careless repetition of mistakes, men remain where they were, and make no progress. This matter of reviewing is not a small one, though to you it may be entirely new. Try it, and you will say with me that it has very great advantages.

CHAPTER VII.

PRIVATE LESSON STUDY. — CONTINUED.

SINCE the Bible is the one book that we study in the Sunday school, and since it is the Word of the Living God, and since upon its right understanding so much depends in the lives of our scholars, it is apparent, at once, that we ought to be well informed with regard to its contents. As a help in this direction, I want to deal in this chapter with the Book itself.

WE TEACH THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOK IN ALL THE WORLD. — To this statement all give unqualified assent. This Book has had more influence on the uplifting of humanity than all other books put together. This being so, it is evident that ours is a most important work. For we believe that not only the temporal interests of our scholars will be largely affected by their attitude to this Book, but that their eternal welfare depends on how they receive its teachings. Rightly, then, to apprehend the work that, as teachers of the Word of God, we are called upon to do, is to realize that ours is a supremely important task.

THIS BOOK HAS SOME VERY STRANGE PECULIARITIES. — It was written by many men. How many

exactly we do not know. But about thirty men were engaged in the preparation of this volume. And not about that, for they lived in different times, far apart the one from the other. Between Moses and Paul there are fifteen centuries of time. Moreover, these men lived in different countries, some being in Palestine, some in Rome, Assyria, Babylon, and other parts of the world.

Their education differed much, some, like Moses, having had the best educational advantages that the world could offer, and others, like Amos or Peter, having had very few opportunities for culture. Some of them, too, were rich, and some poorer than poverty; some were on thrones, like David, while others were prisoners, like the Apostle John when he wrote the Revelation. So we see that in these respects this Book is different from any other book that the world has ever seen.

Yet All These Various Books Point to One Man. — Jesus Christ is the pivotal character to whom all point. Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets, all spake of him. This gives to all these various books, by various authors, written at different times and in various places, a unity such as no other book in all the world possesses. And when, in addition to all this, we remember that this Book was written by the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God, we begin to realize our tremendous responsibility in teaching it to others.

Of Course, in Teaching so Wonderful a Book, we must know more than the mere lesson that we have to handle on the Sunday with our classes. Imagine, for example, a teacher teaching a class about the death of Lincoln, who at the same time knew nothing of the causes that led to his assassination and the results that flowed from it. Should we not say that that teacher was not fitted for the work that he was trying to do? Yet there are many teachers in our Sunday schools who are doing just this same thing. They know something about the particular lesson in hand, but they have very little idea as to the causes that led to the events of which the lesson speaks, or of the consequences that followed. This is ignorant teaching and can produce but little result. Of course, I know that God can bless the foolishness of teaching, but I also know that he is far more likely to bless good teaching than bad.

"But I Have no Time to Study Much," says some teacher who has read thus far in this chapter. "The field that is here opened up is too wide for a busy person like me to fully master."

Now, with such a reply I have the greatest sympathy. I know how busy many of our best teachers are, and that if they are to become masters of the *whole* Word before they teach they will never teach at all. Yet we can ill afford to lose them from the ranks of Sunday school workers. My very sympathy with them has led me to take up this subject.

I want, if possible, to point out to them a way in

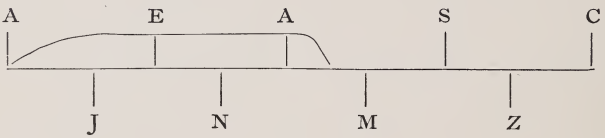
which they can gain a good deal more knowledge of the Word than they have, with small expenditure of time and strength. I have no highway of study that shall make effort needless. But I think I have a way that, being made smooth for the busy teacher, shall lead him farther and better than if he be left to blaze out a pathway for himself.

In a Collection of Books Like Those of the Bible there are some parts that are most important, others that are important, and yet others that are of small importance relatively. The Levitical ritual, in many of its details, while very interesting to the close student, is not of great importance to the average scholar. To fully master much of the imagery of the prophet Ezekiel would not pay for the labor involved on the part of the busy teacher, as compared with the study of the life of Christ or that of Paul.

On the other hand, there are times and persons about which and whom not to be well informed is inexcusable. No one can be a good teacher who is ignorant in these lines. About crucial times and great leaders we must be well informed, if we would be competent to lead our classes. Nor is this so difficult as may at first sight appear. A little careful study will so familiarize us with these that we shall feel at home in dealing with them. In order to do this, the very first thing that is requisite is that we should know the outline of

The Chronology of the Bible. — This is easy,

and a small outline that shall appeal to the eye may here be helpful to the teacher, as it has been to me. I take it from the "Chautauqua outline," and commend



it to the careful study of all who want to know a little of Bible times.

The line above represents the four thousand years between Adam and Christ, according to Usher's chronology. These four thousand years we have divided into sections of five hundred years each, and have put the first letter of the name of the most prominent man of each period over or under the line.

These names, then, are Adam, Jared, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Christ. Surely to remember this is not hard. But when remembered, see how it will help in all your chronological placing of the Bible characters! You can at once roughly locate any event or person in the whole history, by means of this simple chart.

Have You a Lesson About Isaac? — Then he must fall in the space between the second A and M. Anything whatever that happened to Israel in the Land of Promise must fall between M and C. All the major and most of the minor prophets come between M and Z. Whatever happened in the times of the Judges is to be

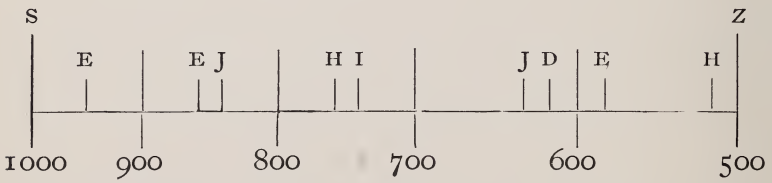
placed between M and S. In this way, you see, you can easily locate all persons and events, at least approximately, and thus gain an intelligent idea as to the *relativity* of the history of Israel. This is no small matter, and yet many teachers have no clear idea of the chronology of the Word, albeit it is not a difficult matter, and, when once mastered, helps much in the intelligent study of the Word.

Do You See the Arch That Spans the Space from A to a little beyond the second A? That represents the time covered by the one book of Genesis. I have seen teachers express great surprise when they have for the first time realized what a wide sweep that one book has. It covers more time than *all the other books of the Bible put together*. This gives us a new idea of the importance of that one book. It shows at a glance that if you find a thing in Genesis you place it in the time covered by that arch. If anything is found in any other book, it must fall to the right of the arch.

Now Get to Work a Little Yourself. — I have given the outline, and it is for you to make further use of it. Never read anywhere in the Word without placing the part that you read in its proper place on this chart. Never try to study a lesson without being sure where it belongs among the divisions given here. Be a little patient in this, and, I assure you, presently you will begin to realize what a help this simple device is to you. It would be well for you to take time and

draw a chart for yourself, and then locate by letters, first, the great personages of the Old Testament on it, and then, on another chart, all the prophets, as nearly as you can. Since they all fall between S and a little after Z, you might draw a larger chart of that five hundred years, and then subdivide that into sections of one hundred (or fifty) years, each, and place the prophets in their proper order in that enlarged chart. This will make clear to you the relation of the major and minor prophets.

Below You Will Find This Done for You, but it will be far better if you will take a piece of paper and do it over again for yourself, as that will fix it in your mind much more firmly than if you simply glance at what some one else has done for you.



Here you see the five hundred years from Solomon to Zerubbabel, the dates being those B.C. In these sections I have placed the names of the prophets, Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and Haggai. Malachi falls *after* Zerubbabel. Of course the date is only approximately marked in each case, but it is near enough to serve all practical purposes.

But This Will Give You Only a Rough Outline of Bible chronology. Something more than this is needed. And if you have mastered this, I am sure that you will be willing to go on a little further.

As I said a moment ago, there are some periods and some persons in Bible history that are of more importance than others. With these we should aim to be well acquainted, just as we aim to be with regard to the more important periods of our own national history. Of these I will only call attention to *four*. Not that I would not like to speak of others, but that I fear to frighten the busy teacher into saying, "*Well, it is just as I thought. He began simply, but now he has gone off just like all the rest of them, and lays out so much work that it is a sheer impossibility for me to attempt it.*"

Now, do not be in too much of a hurry in passing your judgment. Only try what I am about to suggest, and then judge. But do not judge beforehand. If, after trying to do as I suggest, you find it is not in the range of your ability, then stop. But do not stop before you have started. This is what makes so many failures.

The First of These Periods is That of the Great Abraham. — When God called him he began the formation of that remarkable people through whom more of divine truth has come to the world than through all other peoples put together. Surely, then, this is an important period, and we, as teachers of the Word,

should be well acquainted with it. Moreover, it is a most interesting period of history, and revolves around three names, namely, those of father, son, and grandson.

The mere careful reading of the Bible story here, though good in itself, is not enough. The teacher must have some help outside of this. This help must be condensed and interesting at the same time, and, above all, *clear*. I know of just such a help, and say that it can be found in a small but remarkable book, entitled "Ages before Moses," by Dr. J. M. Gibson. Any good bookseller will get it for you. It costs about seventy-five cents.

Though small, it is a most fascinating book, and the chapter on the "Perspective of the Bible" will throw more light on the Word than many volumes of the ordinary commentary style. Read it carefully, if possible marking those passages that seem to you the most important. (And here let me tell you a secret. A good book well read and digested is of far more value than ten big books carelessly read. And, in general, I have found that the bigger a book is, the less I get from it of value.)

The Second of These Periods is That of Moses. — Of all the men in the Old Testament times, he was without controversy the greatest. To him was given a larger revelation than to any man before Paul. He had the gigantic task of amalgamating the nation and instructing them in spiritual things, and, above all, to

him was given the revelation of that system of typology that spoke of the Messiah. In all the story of Moses, the most important thing for the Bible teacher is not the mere history, but that great object lesson of Tabernacle, Priest, and Sacrifice which typified the suffering and work of the Son of God.

The well-instructed teacher simply MUST know the meaning of all the ceremonial if he would understand the full meaning of the work of Christ. For here we have a threefold set of lessons, all of which point to the Saviour. First, the Tabernacle, then the High Priest, and, finally, the sacrifices. For a careful and practical understanding of this threefold set of types, I commend "Christ in the Tabernacle," by White, a small book, but most instructive. It costs about seventy-five cents, and is well illustrated with colored pictures.

The Third Important Period to which I will call attention is the time of Christ. It is too bad that so many of our teachers are so poorly acquainted with this. Many of them have not even read any life of Christ; some being discouraged by the size of these works, and others by their price. Well, here, as in so many other cases, it is not the biggest book that is the best for the average teacher.

I have read lives of Christ by Drs. Deems, Crosby, Hanna, Farrar, Geikie, and Edersheim. But all of them put together have not helped me as much in a practical way as the small "Life of Christ" by Dr. Stalker. Get that. It is small and cheap. It will give you a clearer

idea of the life of the Master than any other book of its size that I know of. Study it well, and then see if it does not pay you for all your effort.

The Fourth Important Period to which I will call attention is that of the Apostle Paul. He had more to do with the formation of the Christian Church and the spread of the truth than any of the other apostles, and it is important that you should be well acquainted with his work. As Moses was the greatest man in the Old Testament, so Paul was the greatest of all the New Testament characters (of course excepting Christ). Here, again, fortunately, I can commend a small and cheap book. It is the life of Paul, written by Dr. Stalker, and can be found on any bookseller's counter.

Now I am Filled with Fear. — For I am sure that some of those who have read thus far will make up their minds that they will try the course I have outlined *some* day. But day by day will slip by and they will postpone the beginning of this study till all that has been said will have passed from memory, and the work remain undone. What then? Why, send at once for one of the books alluded to and try to master that, and then I am sure that you will not be content till you have done the same with the other three. They are all small, but clear, and interesting, and cheap. What more could you ask?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ART OF QUESTIONING.

MANY TEACHERS THINK that if they only talk through the lesson time to their scholars they have taught the lesson. There can be no greater mistake than this. For "*lecturing*" is by no means necessarily *teaching*. You may talk for half an hour to your class, and they be but little wiser when you get through than they were at the beginning. In large adult classes, where there are timid ladies, you may be obliged to do such lecturing, but it never is as good as the colloquial manner of question and answer. For this latter keeps the attention of the class by the very change of speaker, and by the natural inclination of the human mind to pay attention to a question and to its answer as well. The advantages of this method are many, and to some of them I wish to call especial attention.

A QUESTION MAY BE USED TO TEST KNOWLEDGE. — In fact, there is no other way of doing this so simple and direct. Many a time the teacher thinks that the class has clearer ideas than they really have, and by a simple question finds out her mistake. For example, a teacher in my school once asked a scholar who the Pharisees were. The reply was that they

were people living in Paris. (The child had in reading pronounced the word "Parisees.")

The question brought out the ignorance of the scholar, and enabled the teacher to correct the misunderstanding. This is why so often in your lesson hints you see the words "draw out the lesson facts by appropriate questions." Unless you do this, you can never be sure that your class even knows what the lesson is about.

A Question May Help to Fix Knowledge. — Not so much that which we hear as that which we tell is fixed in our minds. We hear much that goes in at one ear and out at the other. But that which we tell again is apt to be embedded in our memories. Many a scholar may think that he knows his lesson, and yet when he comes to tell it will find that he does not know it as well as he thought that he did. The telling of it will help vastly to make the knowledge acquired permanent, and this is no small matter. For if we only could fix all that we ever knew, what wise people we should be. It is very important, therefore, that the wise teacher should use questions for this needful purpose.

A Question May Help to Clarify Knowledge. — Much of our knowledge is muddy, and not clear. It requires but little experience in dealing with scholars to find this out. They have vague, general ideas, and have never taken the trouble to clarify what they have acquired. For example, most scholars know

that Palestine in the days of Christ was divided into three divisions, and some of them know also that these divisions were called Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. But the geographical relationship of these three provinces is not so clear to many. By asking a simple question you may clarify their minds.

For example, if you ask, "Which of these three provinces was the most northern?" you at once set their minds to work, clarifying what knowledge they have, and the result will be that when they have answered that question they will have a clearer idea of these sections than they had before. This applies to every department of knowledge.

A Question May be Used to Arouse Interest. — One of the troubles of teachers is found in the languid interest that their scholars take in the lessons. This is especially true in those classes where the teacher does most of the talking. A remedy for this may be found in the judicious asking of questions. All scholars like to answer a question the answer to which they know. It is natural to feel so. If, then, the teacher wisely asks questions of the languid scholar, he will, nine times out of ten, arouse him or her to some mental action. This is what we are after; for unless we reach this result we shall have no results, either intellectual or spiritual.

For example, if you have a very dull scholar, and the lesson is about the martyrdom of Stephen, you can always arrest that child's attention by some question like this, "Mary, did you ever see a man stoned to

death?" The stupidest scholar will answer such a question as this. Or, if the lesson is about Paul, you might arouse the very dullest by suddenly asking, "Henry, did you ever hear a murderer preach?" Of course these are extreme examples of questioning, but I have often had recourse to such questions when I have had unusually dull scholars.

Study your class, and then ask such questions as will force them to pay attention, and will arouse their interest.

A Question May be Used to Rebuke Folly.—Every experienced teacher knows that this is true. There are wise young men (that is, wise in their own conceits) who must be at times put to confusion by a wisely directed question that will expose their ignorance and rebuke their folly.

A teacher of my acquaintance once had a young man in his class who used often to say, "I cannot believe what I cannot understand." He thought this was smart.

One day they were passing a field in which there were sheep, horses, and geese, and all happened to be eating grass. The teacher called his attention to this, and then said, "See, they are all eating grass; but in the horse part of this is made into hair; in the sheep, into wool; and in the goose, into feathers. Can you tell me HOW this is done?"

"No," said the boy.

"Then I will not believe it," responded the teacher; "for I will not believe what I cannot understand."

This was enough for that boy, and he never again uttered that foolish statement.

A Question May be Used to Develop Thought. — Suppose that the lesson is on Moses, and the teacher asks, "Henry, who do you think was the greatest man in the Old Testament?" This will lead the boy to think, and even if he gives the wrong answer he will still have done some mental work, and if wrong, can then be corrected. The trouble with so many of our scholars is that they do not think about what they read and learn. One conclusion reached by the scholar as the result of his own thought is worth ten conclusions that he merely accepts because his teacher gives them to him.

A Question May Lead to Immediate Action. — Only last Sunday, after the preaching service, there came an earnest young lady into the inquiry-room, to meet the preacher and a friend of his. She was full in earnest, but was afraid to decide. The gentleman friend said, "If Jesus were himself here, and should ask you to give him your hand in token of loyal allegiance to him, would you do it?"

"Yes," she replied.

"Now, I ask you in his place to give me your hand in token that you take him as your friend. Will you do it?"

"Yes," she again replied, and at once they grasped each other's hands.

The question led her to take action that she had long deferred, and yet action which she had known that

she ought to take. This will often be found to be the case, and a direct personal question may lead the scholar to take action which she would never take without the push of that question. This is a most important use of the question, and yet one which too many teachers never make. Have you ever tried it? If not, why not?

Now All This Means that the teacher must get the scholar to talk, and that to this end questions are indispensable. Unless you reach this result you ought to be thoroughly dissatisfied with your teaching, for it is not as good as it should be. You may be a lecturer, but you are not a teacher.

Now You Reply (for it is time that you said something), "I have tried this and it has proved a failure." Well, that may be, and yet what I have said may also be true. For there are ways and ways of questioning. I have heard some questioning that I did not wonder brought no reply.

I used to have an elder in a church who tried to question those who applied for admission to the church, and in the cases of the little ones the process was not only futile, but painful. This was about the style of question that he put: "Now, Mary, we know that all things work together for good to God's children, and the foreknowledge and wisdom of God are perfect and his ways past finding out; and in view of all this, do you think that at all times you will be submissive to his divine ordinances?"

To this what could poor Mary answer? But if he had said, "Mary, dear, do you want always to do what God wants you to?" he would have gotten a square and true answer. This leads me to give some of the requirements of good questioning.

PUT YOUR QUESTIONS IN SIMPLE WORDS. — Sesquipedalian words are always bad for children and all plain people. Cultivate simplicity to the utmost possible limit. YOU CANNOT BE TOO SIMPLE. This is the way men talk in their business, and why should we not do the same in our religion? Stilted talk is the purest folly in this matter, and only confuses, instead of helping.

MAKE YOUR QUESTIONS SHORT. — Instead of saying, "What do you think were the characteristics of the Apostle Paul?" say, "What kind of a man was Paul?" Aim at brevity, for in that is power. Long and involved questions only serve to confuse, and thus discourage your scholar. It may require some practice to do this successfully, but the result is well worth the labor it requires.

MAKE YOUR QUESTIONS DIRECT. — Take as an example the lesson on Philip and the Ethiopian. Ask questions like the following: —

"Give the name of the man to whom the angel of the Lord spoke."

"What did he tell him?"

"Did Philip obey?"
"Whom did he meet on the way?"
"What was the eunuch doing at this time?"
"In what prophet was he reading?"
"What question did Philip ask him?"
"What did he reply?"
"What was the result of their conversation?"

This is the style of short and direct questions that I advocate. The scholars like them, and they help to clarify the minds of the class, and bring out the main facts of the lesson clearly.

Sometimes Ask the Question of the whole class, and let the first one answer that can. This makes them wide-awake and gives a lively movement to the teaching. The scholar's pride is aroused as to who shall be the first to reply, and if not carried too far, this is a good result. But there is danger here, and so

Sometimes Ask the Question of some individual in the class. Then do not let any one else reply, for that will only confuse matters and hurt the feelings of the one whose answer has thus been anticipated. We must care for the dull ones as well as for those who are wide-awake, and not let the latter monopolize all the answers. If you have asked the question of one scholar, and she does not give an answer, do not give it up. The fault may be not in the scholar, but in the question that you have put to her. Then vary the question, and see if in some way you cannot still get a satisfactory

answer. This will show the scholar that you are ready to take pains with her, and will gratify her.

At Other Times Ask a General Question, telling the class to be ready to give the answer as soon as you call for it, but not before. This gives them all an even chance. Then call on some scholar by name, and ask for the correct answer. If that one cannot give it, ask the others in turn, or throw the answer out for any one to give. Whatever you do, do not be stereotyped in your methods, for variety is the spice of a great many things in this life.

It is a Good Thing for inexperienced teachers to write out their own questions beforehand. You may reply that this is not necessary, for you have the printed questions in the lesson helps, and they will answer every purpose. No; they will not do half as well as your own, prepared with a view of meeting the needs of your own class. No one else can do as well for my class as I can, provided I take the pains that are called for in my preparation.

Then take these questions into the class with you, if you are timid, and use them for awhile. You will not have done this long before you find that you do not need them, and will leave them at home. But you will after a time make a further advance in the line of independence, and find the questions will suggest themselves, without your taking the trouble of writing them down at home.

This is the true luxury of teaching, when you have only to be sure that you have mastered the matter and the main lines of thought that you wish to pursue, while all the rest takes care of itself.

And Now I Fancy I Hear Some One Say, "It is of no use; I have tried all this before, and it was a dismal failure; so I have gone back to the old way of relying on the questions in the lesson helps."

Well, then, I am truly sorry for you, for you have gone from a good thing to a bad. It takes some time to become an expert in the wise asking of questions. Rome was not built in a day, and you thought that success was going to come to you too soon. A good thing always has to be worked for, and the power of handling questions to good effect is a very great gift, which can be had only if you are willing to work for it.

All teachers who have excelled in this line have done so only by hard work and a vast deal of practice. You, too, can, if you will put as much effort into it as they did. Try again, and if, after you have really tried for one year, you find that you are no nearer the goal than you are now, write to me, and I will take back all that I have said on this whole question. But before you write to me ask your scholars what they think about your progress, and if they say that they enjoy your teaching better than they used to, you may take it for granted that you have really made progress, and so need not write to me. This will save you some time and one stamp.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TEACHER OUTSIDE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

BY MRS. A. F. SCHAUFFLER.

AS A TEACHER YOU MUST NOT BE SATISFIED with the influence you are able to exert during the hour and a half of the Sunday school session. Little opportunity is given there for ascertaining the scholars' true character and daily habits. And how can you talk to the members of your class about meeting temptations, if you have not the least idea what those temptations are? Think of the proportion of time that they are with you compared with the rest of their lives! One hour and a half out of one hundred and sixty-eight hours is spent with you every week! Do not wonder that you do so little with your class, but wonder that you do anything.

NO TEACHER CAN POSSIBLY TEACH in the best way who does not know the home life of each scholar. Has he the blessing of a Christian home, or the misery of a drunken father and broken-hearted, despairing mother? Ascertain the home surroundings of every one of your pupils as soon as possible by a visit. Be sure to time your visit judiciously. If it is to a family where the mother does her own work, be careful to go in the afternoon, at the end of the week; for the reception will be

very different which you will meet if you go then from what it would be if you surprised the mother in the midst of the family washing and ironing. Even if the parents are not church-goers themselves, they will be pleased at your interest in their children, and in nine cases out of ten you will meet with a friendly welcome.

The Opportunity for Direct Work for the parents often opens before the teacher in the easiest possible way, and the invitation to attend church services may be quite naturally followed up by an earnest invitation to accept Christ as a Saviour. Be sure that you do not fail to enter this open door of opportunity, for it may be that God has given you a larger work to do in the home than in the class. "He who lays his hand on a child's head lays it upon the mother's heart"; so, if you are a loving teacher, the door is open. If you find that the parents are not Christians, and the children are, do not fail to ask them to pray for their parents' conversion, joining with them, and encouraging their efforts by dwelling on the promises made to those who ask in faith.

Make Great Use of the Pen in your intercourse with your scholars. Many of them never receive a letter all the year through, so that, if you write, it will be a great event for them, and your letters will long be treasured to be read and re-read. You can say some things better in a letter than you can face to face. Never use a postal card for anything of a private nature,

but always a sealed letter, or the entire family will be likely to read the postal before your scholar ever sees it. Do not forget judicious praise when it is possible to give it. Praise goes farther than blame.

When Away from Your Class in the happy holiday time, do not forget to send back cheerful, bright letters to the stay-at-home ones, enclosing a tiny photograph or a pressed flower, to prove that you are thinking of them even when far away; or, if you are the one to remain at home, write to the scholars who are absent, so that, in the midst of new scenes and new temptations, they may be reminded of all good Sunday school influences.

Ascertain the Birthdays of all the members of your class, and write to them, on these occasions, earnest words of warning, tender words of sympathy, or hearty words of commendation, as your heart prompts you. There is a touch of sentiment about a birthday greeting which makes it go farther than an ordinary letter.

How Far the Example of the Teacher Goes only the future will disclose. The teacher never knows when he is being watched by the keenly critical eyes of his scholar. It is wonderful how sharp and bright young eyes can be, and how they can look beneath the surface.

A young girl once came before the session of a church in New York and applied for membership.

When asked what first fixed her attention on divine things, she replied: "It was my Sunday school teacher's behavior in church. I sat just behind her, and when I saw her reverent and earnest attention to the whole service, week after week, it was impressed on my heart that the things which she so loved must be worth loving, and I began to listen for myself."

And yet, perchance, this very teacher was discouraged and thought that she was accomplishing nothing. Who can estimate the power of a godly life? Dr. Stalker says: "Public life for God must be preceded by private life with God; unless God has first spoken to a man, it is vain for a man to attempt to speak for God."

Inducing One Scholar to Influence Another is a capital way of working. Strong friendships exist among the scholars, and often the best results can be obtained by a wise use of this fact. If one, in a pair of friends, seems more steady than the other, beg the steady one to bring his friend to the Sunday service or the weekly prayer meeting. All that is best in the pupil is thus roused into action, and his influence produces effects which you alone could never have accomplished. On the other hand, the teacher sometimes has the sadness of seeing a steady scholar led away by a wayward one, and then hard work and much prayer will alone suffice to bring back the wanderers. Watch the friendships in your class, and see in which way they are leading your scholars.

Sometimes You Will Find these friendships in your class suddenly broken up by pique or jealousy; and then comes the teacher's golden opportunity to win the reward promised to the peacemaker. Try to ascertain the cause of the trouble. Make a wise effort to smooth things over; dwell on the beauty and power of true friendship and the sweetness of humility in God's sight. If you can induce the offending one to say, "I am sorry; please forgive me," to the injured friend, your evening prayer will be sweet, and your pillow will be one of peace. Often these quarrels have no better cause for existing than — "Somebody said you said I was —" A quarrel of great height and breadth can be built on a foundation so slender. If you have the skill to shatter the foundation by proving that it *was never there*, the quarrel soon will come to a peaceful end.

Redouble All Your Efforts as your scholars arrive at the age of sixteen or seventeen. This is the crucial period in their lives, and many drift away then from church and Sunday school who up to that time have been full of promise. The world surges around them as they reach an age of independent thought and action, and the strong sudden tide too often carries them away. Only this week I heard of a mother lamenting over her son, a lad of seventeen, who seldom goes to Sunday school now, and yet for several years he won the reward for regular attendance, never missing a Sunday. He has *begun to drift*. Look out for such cases as this, and speak in time.

Attention in Time of Illness. — Illness among the scholars gives the teachers a grand opportunity for service. If there is poverty in the house, there is need of food and other comforts. If there is lingering sickness, either among rich or poor, there is the need of visits to cheer the patient, or to comfort those who care for the invalid. By all means impress on the other members of the class their privilege in such cases. Sometimes it is possible for all the class to go together to sing hymns and hold a little prayer meeting in the sick-room. Best of all the gospel message can be pressed home to the heart in the quiet hours of enforced rest, when the world is temporarily shut out. Perhaps you may have a "shut-in" one among your scholars, who can never come to the school, and yet is able to study the weekly lesson.

Attend the Teachers' Meeting if you possibly can. Encourage the older members of your class to go with you, if they are advanced enough to act as substitute teachers. Ask them *in turn* to be prepared to act as substitutes, so that the same ones need not be called upon every Sunday. Be faithful in attending all the church services, and watch for your scholars when there. If they have no regular seat, invite them to sit with you, or go and sit with them in the free pews. It is hard to go to church Sunday after Sunday alone, with no one to care whether you go or not; and a teacher can do much to keep up an interest in the services by being always ready to greet her scholars with a welcoming smile.

PRAY WITH AND FOR YOUR PUPILS. — Pray for them by name in your daily devotions; and do not forget to give hearty thanks when your prayers are heard and your pupils begin to lead consistent Christian lives. Class prayer meetings are an excellent means of bringing forward the shy ones, and giving them courage to hear their own voices in prayer. Let these meetings be held directly after the Sunday school session, in the most quiet corner that can be found. Encourage your pupils to ask for prayer for any especial subject that is near their hearts; and then, kneeling down in a circle, pray first yourself very briefly, and request *every member of the class* to follow in turn with a few words of prayer. Even if it be but one sentence, it is a good thing, and the power to pray aloud will soon increase by exercise.

HELPING THE SUPERINTENDENT is among the teacher's duties; and one of the best ways to do this is to refrain from sharp criticism. "Put yourself in his place" continually, so that you can estimate a little his difficulties and discouragements. See to it that you are neither the one nor the other. If every teacher in the school could be superintendent for a few months in turn, we should have less criticism and more sympathy. If the superintendent does anything which troubles you, do not speak of it to any other teacher, but go directly to him, and tell him of the cause of your trouble, and nine times out of ten this will be sufficient to end the difficulty.

Interest in Missions May be Much Fostered by an enthusiastic teacher; and perhaps some child whom you thus influence may one day become a useful missionary. Miss Agnew, for forty years an excellent missionary in Ceylon, formed the purpose to go to the foreign field when only eight years old, although she was compelled to wait till she was thirty before she was able to fulfil her desire. When Robert Moffat, the great African missionary, joined the church in Scotland, at a very early age, one old elder was much disturbed; and when some one asked him if there had been any additions to the church at the communion season, he replied sadly, "No one came forward but wee Bobbie Moffat." Could he but have foreseen the grand career of "wee Bobbie," how his heart would have swelled with grateful joy! Perhaps there is a "wee Bobbie" in your class.

CHAPTER X.

OBJECT TEACHING.

THERE ARE TWO MAIN AVENUES by which we can approach the minds of our scholars. These are "eye gate" and "ear gate." Compared with the other three senses, these two are by far the most often used. If we could appreciate the proportion of knowledge which enters the child's mind through these two gates, we should be much surprised.

IN CHILDHOOD THE EYE IS THE PIONEER IN ALL LEARNING. — The child sees, and, as soon as possible, begins to ask the meaning of that which appeals to its eyes. The ear is largely the mere interpreter of that which attracts its attention. The things which make the deepest impression on the growing mind are those which are seen, while those which are merely heard are apt to slip from the memory. We can readily understand this, if we will make use of our own memories.

What are the things that we remember from our childhood the best? Are they not the pictures that attracted us? The Bible stories that we never can forget are those which were illustrated. Even in our geographies, the things best remembered are the illustrations of the scenery, customs, and manners of the

lands and people of which the geography spoke. This tells the story, and affirms the truth that the eye is a most potent factor in the education of the young.

In Mature Years it is still in large measure the same. Our literature bears witness to the fact that the eye is a wonderful teacher. We make use of the engraver's art, and the traveler brings his camera into play constantly. Look at our monthly magazines and see how well the publishers have learned the lesson of appealing to the eye. For the eye is not only more accurate than the ear in imparting information, but it is far more correct, and far swifter. If you want to give an idea of a scene or of a piece of machinery, a picture will do this far better than a page of explanation.

Secular Teachers Know the Truth which we are affirming and make use of it continually. No man lectures on matters scientific without, if possible, making use of the blackboard, or of objects with which to help the understanding of his hearers. This is one reason why scientific lectures by competent teachers are so very popular. The hearers grasp that which is presented, and carry it away with them.

Since These Things are so, ought not all religious teachers to make greater use of the eye in their work than they do? This goes without saying, and yet it still remains true that very few Sunday school teach-

ers ever appeal to the eyes of their scholars, excepting it be at times by way of showing them a picture or two.

What is the reason for this? In part it arises from the fact that teachers have never had their attention called to the importance of the matter, and, in part, because they feel that they do not know how to get to work. To help them, I write as I do, and my theme is the use of object lessons.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE IN ALL OBJECT TEACHING is the likeness that exists between things material and things spiritual. There is an analogy in some points between all things material and all things spiritual which needs only to be stated to be realized. These analogies are the more easily seen by the scholar if the object by means of which you propose to illustrate a spiritual truth is before their eyes.

For example, take a watch. A watch is like a boy in many particulars. It is made to go. So is a boy. Every lad will easily understand this. It sometimes gets out of order. So does a boy. If it gets out of order, it must be repaired. So must a boy. If he loses his temper, he needs repairing in this particular. A watch needs to be wound up each day. So the Christian boy needs to be wound up each day by his heavenly owner, for he cannot to-day get strength for to-morrow. To-day he gets what he needs for to-day and no more. A watch is a delicate thing and must be carefully handled. But a boy is a far more delicate

thing than a watch, and should therefore take more care of himself.

There are many more analogies between a watch and a boy, but these will suffice to illustrate what I mean. Of course, the teacher could draw all these analogies without having a watch in his hand. But he would fail to interest his class as deeply as he can do if, while he is speaking, he holds the watch where they all can see it.

What the Teacher then Needs is to Learn to See these "likenesses" that, as a matter of fact, abound on every hand. A friend once came to my study to ask me to give him an object talk, as he had to address a gathering of boys soon, and he wanted to hold their attention. I said to him: "I will give you no object talk. Make one for yourself."

To this he replied that it was impossible for him to do so. I said to him, "There stands a student's lamp on the table. Look at it till some likeness suggests itself to you."

Then I went on with my work. For awhile he gazed at the lamp in silence. Then he spoke up, and said: "It is made to give light."

"Yes," said I, "and so is a boy."

"I see," said he.

"Go on," replied I, "and look till you get another likeness."

Presently he spoke again, and said, "It will not give light unless it is lighted."

"No more will a boy, till he gets light from him who is the light of the world," said I.

Thus, having begun, he went on and drew out a great number of very apt and helpful analogies that could be well used in an address to boys. And when he went away he had himself worked out a talk which was far more helpful to him than if I had stopped my work and done it all for him.

Of Course, in Using Objects in a Class, only such things can be taken as will not distract the attention of neighboring classes. Should the teacher, however, have a classroom to himself, he will be much more free, and will be able to use pretty much anything that he desires.

There are, however, multitudes of small objects which can be taken by the teacher into the ordinary class, and there be made a source not of interest only, but of instruction as well. In the selection of these objects, and in the drawing out of analogies suggested by them, practice is needed. Let no teacher, however, think that because he cannot now make skilful use of material things, therefore he ought not to try.

Let him make the effort consistently and persistently, and he will find here, as elsewhere, "experience teaches all things." He will find, too, that it is far easier to hold the attention of his class. The scholars will come more regularly, will remember more perfectly, and will behave better than under the ordinary kind of teaching.

In Order to Help the Teacher Along the line suggested above, I am now going to give quite a number of objects which can be used to illustrate and enforce divine truth. The space allotted to me is so narrow that I cannot draw out at length the analogies which I here suggest. All that I can do is to give the teacher some specimen work, and then beseech him to follow the lines indicated and work out new analogies himself.

To Illustrate the Principle of Growth in Grace seeds of any kind can be used. These seeds have in them the principles of life. In this they are like the Word of God, which our Master says is seed. If these seeds, however, were not planted, and if they did not receive moisture, and warmth, and light, they would never germinate. So, unless the word is planted in the human heart, is watered by the "early and latter rain of the Spirit," and is warmed by the rays of the "Sun of Righteousness," the seed will remain dead.

To Illustrate the Fact that "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," take two bulbs, one, say, a white and the other a purple hyacinth. Tell the class what these bulbs are, ask whether if you plant a purple bulb it will ever produce a white flower.

They will reply, "Never." Ask them whether if a boy sows lies, he can reap truth. Or if he sows drunkenness can he reap sobriety? The teacher can easily see how many applications can be made from the

analogies drawn between these bulbs and spiritual growth.

To Illustrate the Unseen but Not Unfelt Power of the Holy Spirit, take a magnet. At any hardware store these can be had for twenty-five cents. When you come to make application of the truth to the class, produce your magnet, show how it draws tacks, or any article of iron. The power of the magnet is not seen, but is felt. So with the work of the Holy Spirit on our hearts, — we cannot see him, yet every scholar feels his drawing power. Jesus himself said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

Should Any Lesson Occur in which God's estimate of us is set forth, the teacher may well take a blank book, and from it illustrate how God keeps a record of our lives. Every thought that we think, every word we utter, every deed we perform is by him recorded. Just suppose that each day of our lives were fully traced out on a page of this book, what do you think the record would be? Yesterday's page is filled. To-day's is being filled; to-morrow's is yet blank. Do you want to have repeated to-morrow what was recorded yesterday? Something will be recorded. What shall it be?

Hypocrisy is One of the Sins against which the Saviour thundered. To try and seem to be what you are not is a wicked thing. Take an artificial flower of

any kind into the class. Show it to the scholars; ask whether this be real or counterfeit. If you were plucking flowers in a garden and found that half of them were artificial, would you not consider yourself defrauded? How much worse, then, if people, looking at us and expecting to find Christian lives, found only their counterfeit. We punish counterfeiters in money severely when they are detected. Will not God then punish counterfeiters in character, whose hypocrisy he knows all the time?

Take a Spool of Thread into the class some day. By means of this many truths may be illustrated. For example, you can illustrate the binding force of evil habits. Ask the scholar to break one strand of the thread, which he can easily do. A double strand he will find somewhat more difficult. Now quadruple the thread and ask him to break it. He will find it harder still. Double your thread now until you have fifteen or twenty strands, twist them like a rope, and ask the boy to snap it. He will fail.

So one lie binds a boy slightly, but he can break away from this easily; repeat the lie, quadruple it, manifold it, and presently the boy is a confirmed liar, and is bound like a slave. The same holds true of the drink habit, of gambling, disobedience to parents, or any other sin which carries our scholars captive.

In a Sunday Review Once, a lesson happened to be on Samuel, and I was to speak to the scholars. I

asked if there were any boys there by the name of Samuel, and four boys arose. Choosing the best looking of them, I called him to the platform, blindfolded him, then I put the end of a thread into his hands, myself holding the other end, and said, "Samuel, when you feel this draw, follow." In this way I led him all about the Sunday school room, the only connection between him and myself being that thread. The whole school arose to watch. Presently I said, "Samuel, hold back." He stood still, I kept on, the thread broke.

Going back to the platform, I said, "See how Samuel was led safely so long as he followed the pull of the thread. See how he lost his connection with me when he held back; so the Samuel of our lesson followed when God called, and said, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.' If he had held back and refused, God's guidance would have been offered in vain."

The Bible Says Much of "traps," "gins," "snares." All this may be illustrated by a rat-trap, taken into the class or used on the platform. This trap is baited, and therefore attractive to the creatures, and is designed to harm. The attractions are set forth manifestly, the dangers are concealed, so the rat walks in, yields to the temptation, is caught and killed. Satan has many traps. He tempts boys to take postage stamps in the offices where they work, or money from the till, setting forth the attractions in hiding the dangers. The boy yields and is snared.

Having Once the Superintending of a rather unruly school, to which I was a stranger, and the lesson being the anointing of the Saviour by Mary, it occurred to me to introduce the lesson in such a way as to interest the scholars from the start. I took a small bottle of cologne with me.

Before the lesson was read responsively, I said, "Will all the teachers please come to the platform?" This rather aroused the attention of the school, as it was an unusual thing. When they were all in front of me, I said, "Please take out your handkerchiefs," which they did.

I then poured upon each handkerchief a liberal allowance of cologne. The scholars watched, greatly wondering what I was doing. I then said, "Will the teachers please go to their seats, waving their handkerchiefs in the air?" which they did, and the whole room was filled with fragrance. It pleased the scholars much. Then I said, "This room smells sweet, does it not? But we are now going to read about a room that smelled far more sweetly than this does. Turn to the lesson, please."

That lesson was read with great interest by the school, and I had their undivided attention.

Behold How Great a Matter a Little Fire Kindleth, and the tongue is a fire. Illustrate this by a match, which you may light or not, as you please. Under proper circumstances, this match lighted can blow a ship into the air or set a city on fire. So James

says, "The tongue is a fire," and I have known churches set on fire, and Sunday schools put into a blaze, and families torn asunder by a wicked use of the tongue.

We All Acknowledge that the Bible is our guide from this world to a better land lying beyond. In this respect the Bible is to us a kind of compass. The teacher, taking a compass into the class, can easily explain to the scholars the principles on which it works; tell them that by means of such compasses as this steamships are guided across the mighty deep, in light and in darkness, in mist and in fog. If, however, they disregard the indications of the needle, danger and disaster await them. So through all the experiences of life the Bible is our compass. If we follow where it points, we are safe, but, "since it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and since "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool," the man who disregards what the Bible says is sure to come to bad ends.

Many Sunday School Teachers are Amateur Photographers. Many lessons can be taught and many analogies drawn from photographic processes. The sensitized plate is like the heart of the scholar, exceedingly sensitive. Let the teacher take into the class a plate-holder with a clean plate, also a plate on which the image has been developed and fixed. Tell the scholars that you hold in your hand a plate so sensitive that if exposed to the light for the hundredth part

of a second it will record an impression. But, if exposed wrongly for the same length of time, the plate will be ruined. Tell them that you now will ruin the plate; then withdraw the slide, and, showing the plate to them, tell them that, because wrongly exposed, it is spoiled.

So the heart of the scholar, exposed to wrong influences, is marred, but, exposed to right and sweet influences, receives wholesome impressions. I will not further develop analogies from the photographic art, more than to say that the impression on the plate must be developed; so the impression of truth on the scholar's heart must be developed. Further, the impression must be fixed on the plate and heart as well. Finally, the impression can be transferred ten thousand times by means of one plate. So a scholar, with the image of Christ impressed, developed, and fixed on his heart, can transfer that same impression to thousands of others in the course of his life.

A Capital Object Lesson Can be Made by means of the piano, organ, and platform. The analogies I will suggest are as follows: The piano is made to pour forth harmony; so our lives should be harmonious in praising God. Let some one now play the melody of a sweet tune with one finger on the instrument. That sounds well, and what is it like? Like one single member of the family living to God's praise. There is something, however, sweeter than this. Now let the same tune be played with soprano and alto. This is sweeter

than the soprano alone. And what is this like? Like two sisters in the same family, living for God's service.

Now let the organist play the same tune with its full harmony. This is still better; and of what does this remind us, if it be not of the family where all the members are harmoniously living in the love of God and of their fellowmen?

CHAPTER XI.

THE BLACKBOARD.

THE BLACKBOARD is now to be my theme. Not a few superintendents refuse utterly to use a blackboard in their schools. This arises from different causes. Sometimes the reason is that they have seen such a singular use made of the board at some convention or other that they are disgusted with it as a means of imparting truth. They have seen the blackboardist use crosses, crowns, serpents, landscapes, ships, trees, and all manner of symbols, all requiring such artistic ability that they have felt that they themselves could never do such work, and so have made no attempt to use the blackboard in any way.

OTHERS, AGAIN, HAVE NOT SEEN any such uses of the board, but have simply neglected to think sufficiently about the matter to persuade themselves that there is any advantage in its use for their schools. These workers go ahead from week to week, and year to year, without so much as asking themselves whether it would not be a good thing for all concerned if they would make use of a blackboard. They have never pondered at all over the question. To all such I want to talk to-day, and I do hope that if any of these, my

fellow-workers, have read thus far, they will now read on to the end of what I have to say.

That the Blackboard is a Very Great Power in teaching is evident from the fact that no good secular teacher tries to do without it. The very best teachers who speak to intelligent audiences on matters scientific make abundant use of the blackboard. And if they do so, speaking to adults, how much more ought we to follow their example, who address such juvenile audiences. The fact is, that the younger the hearer the more needful is it to use the eye as well as the ear. But adults, as well as children, love to be taught by the eye, and remember much better that which they have seen than that which has appealed to their ears alone.

The Eye is Much Swifter and more accurate in conveying truth to the mind. Just think for one moment how much better an idea you yourself have of an engine when you have seen it than you would have by the very best description that you could read about it. There is no comparison between the two ways of learning. But without the blackboard you are losing the swiftest method of approach to the minds of those whom you are trying to instruct. Did you ever think of this? So much with regard to the importance of using the board in your school. Now for a few details as to the method of use, such as shall be helpful to the average superintendent.

Get a Good Board. — Often at conventions if I ask for a board they give me such a wee mite of a thing that I know not what to do with it. Or else, if the board is large enough, it has such a smooth surface that the chalk slips over it, and does not make a legible mark. Such boards are of no avail. For general use a board ought to be at least four feet long by two and a half wide. In large schools it should be six feet by four. If you have little room on your platform, or wish to set the board aside during the week, get one mounted on a tripod, which can then be folded up and set one side by the sexton. The surface of all boards ought to be silicated and smooth, but by no means shining. With such a board it is a pleasure to work.

It is Important, too, to Have Good Chalk. — For a small school it does not make very much difference, but in a school of a couple of hundred members, you must have thick chalk, to work well and be legible. I use chalk made in sticks an inch thick and about three inches long. It is made in Providence. With it any one can print so as to be easily seen in the largest church. The eraser, too, is important, since if you use an ordinary piece of cloth it smudges the board, and makes it look anything but neat. Get a chamois leather eraser, which will cost twenty-five cents, and last for more than a year.

And Now I Hear Some One Say, "Yes, that is all very well for a rich city school, but our school is

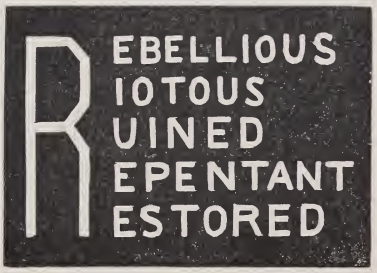
poor, and cannot afford a twelve-dollar board." Oh, yes, you can, if only you think so. If need be, take a year in collecting the needed fund. Surely any school could do it in that length of time. Or it may be you could get some member of the church to give you one out and out, if only you had the courage to go to him or her. At all events, do not let the price delay you more than is necessary, for where there is a will there ought to be a way.

Well, Having Gotten the Board, you ask, "What shall be the style of work that I put onto it?" My reply is, "Only the very simplest imaginable." You need not be ornate or artistic to be helpful. Just let the work be clear, and set forth the plain truth, and you will have done enough to help teachers and scholars in your school.

Only be Bold in Your Lettering. — An inch thick and four inches long is about the right size. Do most of the work in the presence of the whole school, for that always enlists their attention. To give you confidence in this, you will probably have to put what you expect to use on the board several times before the school assembles. I used to go to my Sunday school room on Saturday and practise for an hour sometimes before I was satisfied with the way it worked. Then I rubbed it all out, and drew hair-lines on the board to mark the top and bottom of my letters, and left those to guide me on Sunday. After awhile this

was no longer necessary; for in this, as in many a thing, practice makes perfect.

It is Well for the Leader to be much at home with his theme, so as to be able to keep on talking while he is putting the required lettering on the board. This appeals to the ears of the scholars, while the board engages their eyes. But if you have both the eyes and the ears of your school, there is no danger that they will be in any way disorderly.



No. 1.

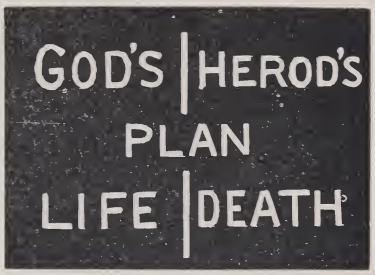
Now, as to the Matter that is to go on the Board. — Sometimes it is well to put only such words on as will suggest the main facts of the lesson. Supposing the lesson is on the Prodigal Son. You might then bring out the facts of his experience as shown in blackboard No. 1.

Or, if the lesson be that which tells us of the plot of Herod against the life of Jesus, you might set this forth as in No. 2.

If the story be that of Zaccheus, you can show how the man was seeking Jesus, but found that Jesus was also seeking him. Then the board would read both down and up as in blackboard No. 3.

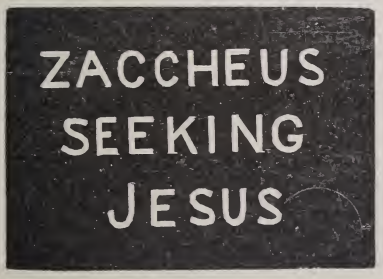
Again, You may not Touch the Facts in the les-

son, but only dwell on the spiritual applications that we draw from it. Of course, the lessons must be such as you can condense into a few words. But this is not hard to do, as soon as you have a little experience in the matter. For example, if you have a lesson on faith, you can easily bring out the way of faith showing the three things that are needful for salvation as in No. 4.



No. 2.

Another example of this might be drawn from the way in which Saul of Tarsus acted on his conversion, which is the way in which all men should act. It reads as in blackboard No. 5.



No. 3.

Or, if the lesson be an invitation to sinners, and you wish to emphasize the fact that all are invited, and that yet they must change their way of life if they accept the invitation, the board will read as shown in No. 6.

It is Perfectly Possible sometimes to teach moral truths by lines only, without any lettering at all. For example, I once saw a teacher emphasize the lesson in the last chapter of Ecclesiastes, about the duty of

No. 4.

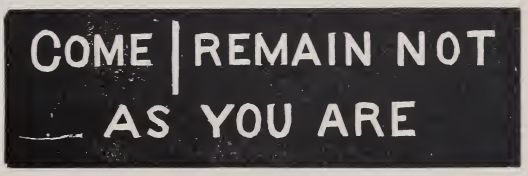
remembering one's Creator in the days of one's youth, by five lines. They were arranged as seen in blackboard No. 7.

And he so impressed his hearers that one of them gave his heart to God on the spot, as a result of the teaching. Of course, as he put the lines on the board, he "talked to his board" somewhat in the following manner: "See, we are all like this first line when we come into this world, helpless and lying prone in our mother's arms. But we do not remain so for very long. Soon the young man begins to walk in his own strength, as you see in this line here. But even that condition does not continue forever, for presently you see the full-grown man walking upright, and bearing on his shoulders the weight of grave business cares. But before long he himself begins to feel the weight of years and toil, and you see he stoops, for he is old.

No. 5.

Now desire begins to fail, for soon he shall go to his long home. And, at last, see, like this last line, he is prostrate and helpless, and as he came into this world, so he must go out. Therefore, remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, when you shall be old and feeble, and death be near."

My Space Will Not Permit Me to go further into details as to the many ways in which simple words or lines may be used by the teacher to impress divine truth on the minds and hearts of the school or the single scholar. Suffice it to say, that after much experience I have found the use of the blackboard so essential that I would not be persuaded by any argument to abandon it. As I said before, the best teachers in Sunday school and in secular schools all make use of it, and it is a pity if any refuse to do what others have found so useful.



No. 6.

No. 7.

And Now, in My Desire to Persuade You to use the board, may I become a little personal? I know how you feel, if you have never

worked on a board. You feel shy, and are afraid that you will do more harm than good by your efforts. Or it may be that you are a little sensitive, and fear that you will fail, and that the school will laugh at you behind your back. I have felt exactly the same thing. Yet the time came when I had the superintendence of a school, when I saw that if I did not buy and use a board I was a kind of a "back number." So I got one and began to work on it as well (or as badly) as I could. I used the best helps that were at hand, and copied them.

Then I prepared my talk so as to suit what went on the board. Sometimes I am confident I made conspicuous failures, for I was, at the best, a beginner. But by degrees things went better, and my letters were a little less crooked. At this I took courage, and went on. Then I began to work out my own plans, and found that with them I could do better than with those that I borrowed from others; not because they were better in themselves, but because they were mine, and suited me better than the others.

At First, I Remember that no lesson seemed to me to yield a good blackboard exercise. All seemed dark and blind. But by degrees I found that many a lesson could be condensed into five or six words, so as to give its very gist and pith. Blackboard exercises came rapidly at last, and it was a pleasure to hunt for them. I found, too, that they were helpful to those whom I taught, and gave new point to the lesson,

besides being much more easily remembered. All this encouraged me to go on, until I lost all shyness and fear, and could work at the board with much ease and comfort.

Of One Thing You Will Have to Beware. Not every lesson yields a good blackboard exercise. If you cannot get a form of words that really is a help to the school, do not use the board for that day. I find that I can use the board to advantage in about three lessons out of four. And rather than put a foolish thing on the board, or one that is of no assistance, I let the board go for that day.

And Now I Hear Some Teachers Say, "Yes, all this is true, and I wish our superintendent would buy and use a blackboard. But he is an old fogy and won't; so what is the use of all this to me?"

Of a great deal of use, if you act rightly. You need not wait for your superintendent to move before you use your scholars' eyes as well as ears in teaching. Take a block of paper with you into your class, and put on that just such truths as I have been talking about in the above paragraphs. If it is a good thing for the superintendent to make use of the eyes of the whole school, surely it is not a bad thing for you to make use of the eyes of your own class. I have known it done many hundreds of times right in the class form, and to great advantage. If you want to make it still more attractive to your scholars, take a colored pencil with you, so that

the very color shall help to gain their attention. I have known scholars to be so impressed with such work in the class as to go home and do over again for mother all that the teacher had done in the class. This is good both for the child and the mother.

Now, the Least that You Can Do is to Try. If you are never willing to try and experiment, you will never make any progress. But do not try once or twice and then give it up. Try, try, try again. It will, perhaps, take you a couple of months to gain ease at this kind of work, but the result is well worth the effort. Will you not at least make the effort?

CHAPTER XII.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MUSIC.

THE MUSIC–LEADER. He should have a good voice, and not be afraid of using it. Nothing will so act on the school as to hear a good voice that leads off well. The leader need not shout, for that is not necessary or agreeable, but he should sing loud enough for all the school to feel the influence of his voice. This will encourage the feeble ones who do not dare to sing, lest they should make a mistake.

IF THE SCHOOL IS LARGE, he should beat time, and that with a leader's baton, in such a way that the school can see him. Many leaders whom I see beat time so low down that the scholars cannot see their hands. This is useless. Hold the hand high, so that all may see the motions of the baton, and you will help the school in keeping time very much. If the scholars still lag, beat the time for a measure or so on the book that you hold in your hand, and that will appeal to their ears as well as to their eyes, so that they will "come up to time."

WHEN THE TUNE IS NEW, let the leader sing a line at a time, and at once have the school sing it after him.

In this way a tune can be learned in a few minutes, and the school will see the ease with which it can do new and even difficult work. In the lesson quarterlies there are nearly always some new tunes, which go unused because the leader is afraid to take them up. He need not fear, but, on the contrary, should realize that the school will be very grateful to him if he gives them new things to sing. One new piece every two weeks will not tax his ability, and will add much freshness to the exercises of the teachers.

In all this the teacher can help the music-leader much by taking part and encouraging the scholars to do the same. If the teacher sits idle while the music-leader is doing his best to make the school sing, he throws a damper on the whole thing. He might better stay at home. I do not now refer to that teacher who *cannot* sing, but to that one who can, but *will* not. Try, and you will see how it helps you yourself to enjoy the whole service. When teachers, officers, and scholars all sing the effect is always good, and the classes are then in better spirit to take up the lesson.

Often the Singing of a school, though good from a musical standpoint, is not helpful spiritually. Why is this? Because the words are not attended to. Music is wings, but the words are the body. Wings without a body are of no use, and so music that does not help the words is of no avail from a spiritual standpoint. Let the scholars understand that the words are the

MAIN THING in the singing, and try to have them sing with understanding as well as the spirit. Let the hymns be explained at times, for the scholars fail to understand what they sing only too often. How many scholars, for example, know what it means to "approach the mercy seat"? How many of them catch the meaning of the words: —

"Though like a wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone"?

Let the allusions, therefore, be *explained* to the school, and they will then sing intelligently. This is a much-neglected matter, but one of great importance.

TRY TO HAVE THE HYMNS that are given out bear some direct reference to the theme of the lesson for the day. That is the central point around which everything should revolve. And yet I have heard hymns given out that did not bear the remotest relation to the lesson, while at the same time the book that was being used had very appropriate hymns that would have been far better than the ones that were chosen. We need to exercise good common sense in this as in all other matters that pertain to our Sunday school work. This will require careful selection of the hymns before the opening of the school; but that is the business of those who have the charge of the school. What on earth are they put there for, if not for work of that kind?

Have Books Enough so that each person shall have one to himself. I have been in many schools where there are not enough books to go around. In such cases, I notice that they supply the girls first, and the boys get what is left. Then presently the music-leader calls out to the boys, "Boys, why don't you sing?" They have a very good reason for not singing. If there are not enough books to go around, let the boys have their share, but, better still, go to work and *get enough for all.* This will cost some money; but if you want the best singing you must pay the bills. Many a school there is which lags in this matter, and then wonders why its music does not go as well as it would like to have it.

Variety is the Spice of a great many things in this life. Therefore, aim to have variety in your *manner* of singing. This is not hard to secure. Have the school sing by sides, for example, and they will be much pleased. In a tune like "Shall We Gather at the River," have one side sing the first line, and the other side sing the second, etc., through the verse, and then the whole school join in the chorus. This will give a very pleasing variety to this part of the exercise, and will lead many to try and sing who would otherwise sag back and take no part in the music.

At times let the leader sing the verse, and let the school unite in the refrain. If the leader cannot do this himself, it may be that he has some teacher or scholar who can do it well. Use all the talent that you have.

In some schools there is a boy who can play on the violin, and another who can do fair work on the flute. Use these boys, and you will attach them to the school very strongly, and at the same time have a pleasing variety. At times have the boys only sing, or the girls only, and then let all join in at the signal given by the leader.

There are other ways besides these that I have indicated, which will occur to any wide-awake leader who thinks about how he can do better than he has been doing. Only let him not go to sleep and think that his school is doing as well as it possibly can.

In Some Schools I have seen this done. The hymn was not sung at all, but was read responsively by superintendent and school. This is a good thing for a change, as it makes the school think of the meaning of the words of the hymn, and not of the music only. Of course this should not be done often, but only once in a while.

Whispered Tunes are very agreeable. Most schools sing too loud, and in some that I have visited they seem to think that *bawling* is singing. Loud singing is proper at times, especially in triumphant pieces. But many tunes are spoiled by the volume of voice that the scholars are encouraged to pour forth. In mission schools, where the tendency is to loud talk, quiet hymns are a great help to stillness. Let the leader train the school to this quiet singing when the theme calls for it, and then the loud chorus will sound all the louder when

it comes. *Contrast* is a grand thing, and can be reached in this way very effectively.

In Schools Where Much is Made of the music, so that they sing a great deal, there ought to be more than one complete set of books. This will give variety, so that for some weeks one of the books may be used, and then for awhile laid aside, and the other brought out. In the school which for fourteen years I superintended we had four different sets of books. In this way we never "sang one book to death." This, again, cost money, but it pays well; and the church that treats its scholars liberally will by and by take such a pride in the singing of its school that it will not grudge it the needful money for books.

When the Time for the Christmas or Easter music comes round, do not stop or curtail the time for the lesson. Many schools at the holiday time are demoralized by their musical drill. There is no need for this at all; and if the music-leader says there is, he is mistaken. Fifteen minutes each day for six weeks before the celebration is enough for any school to learn its new hymns. Only this time must be used and not frittered away in idle talk. *Most leaders talk too much and sing too little.* Hard work will conquer a tune in *six* minutes, and then a new one can be brought forward. In this way the lesson-time may still be maintained, and the school learn all the Christmas hymns that it needs.

There are Some Schools where they seem, at times, to think that music was made to deaden noise arising from some cause or other. If, for example, there is a large number of late-comers who pour in after a prayer has been offered, during which prayer the doors have been closed, a hymn is given out by the leader to be sung while the late-comers are taking their places. This is very improper, for singing is as much devotion as prayer, and it is not fitting that it should be used as a cover for the noise of those who are late. Far, far better do nothing at all while the late scholars are taking their seats than try to sing down their clatter.

This will make them a little ashamed that they have managed to be late, and at the same time will teach your scholars that you think enough of the devotional part of the musical service not to use it merely to drown a noise with. It exalts the musical work, and thus gives it a dignity that it often fails to have in the eyes of the school. In the school that I used to have we never sang while anything else was going on. "One thing at a time" was our rule; and when we sang we did nothing else; and when the late-comers were taking their seats we did nothing but quietly wait for them.

It is Possible to make too much of singing in our work. Some schools so handle their music that it overshadows all else in the exercises. This is a mistake. The central thing in every school ought to be the teaching of the lesson. All else is, or should be, subordi-

nate to this. The Word of God must be exalted in all our work; and singing, and even prayer, should circle around the one idea, that we are here to-day for the reverent *study of God's Word.*

To turn a school exercise into a kind of a sacred concert is a great mistake; and when this kind of concert becomes but slightly sacred, and semi-ballads are used, as I have heard done, it is a profanation of the time devoted to the school exercises. Never let the school degenerate into a concert-hall, in which some listen and others perform. This is what many of our churches have done in the matter of their singing, where a quartette choir does all the singing, and sings such music that the congregation does not understand the words at all, and is as wise as if the singers had sung the hymn in Choctaw.

Much quartette choir-work is a pure abomination to God, and a snare to the people. I say this with good right, for I have sung in such choirs, and have been a member of a boy-choir, and a leader of a mixed choir as well. And my witness is that there is very little real praise in most choirs, and much self-seeking and consequent jealousy where there ought to be real harmony and much praise to God. Keep the whole thing out of the Sunday school; and there, at least, have the people, yea, ALL the people, praise the Lord, and in their praise let the superintendent be as helpful as possible, so that they may sing with the spirit, and with understanding as well. Then your musical part of the service will be a help and not a hindrance to spiritual work.

CHAPTER XIII.

BENEVOLENT OFFERINGS.

I NEVER yet was in any Sunday school where they did not take a collection. This idea of giving seems to have fastened itself firmly to all Sunday school work, and to form a part of it. This is good. It trains the children in the idea that giving is a part of worship, and a Christian duty, as well as privilege. The collection is so important a matter in all our work that I shall take all the space at my command to enlarge on it.

The Collection is a Very Important Part of the Sunday school service. When we consider the power of the Sunday schools of this land in a financial light, we are amazed. We have millions of scholars and about one million of teachers in our American schools. Suppose that each of these gave an average of one cent each Sunday through the year. What a vast sum that would amount to at the close of the year! Take the scholars as numbering eight million, and the teachers one, and you have the stupendous sum of

Four Millions Six Hundred and Eight Thousand Dollars. This is no small sum, as all will agree. It is nearly as much as the combined denomina-

tions of our land give for Home and Foreign Missions each year. And yet it is not all an impossible sum for our schools to give. It only involves the faithful giving of one cent a Sunday by each member of our schools. If now any one should say that there are many in our schools who could not afford to give a cent a week, we should be inclined to doubt the assertion.

But even if it were so, there are many tens of thousands who could give five, ten, or even twenty-five cents a week, and so make up for the really poverty-stricken ones. But even those who are poor are rarely so poor that they could not give this sum, IF THEY WERE TAUGHT TO DO SO. We had a count made once of the amount taken in penny purchases of gum, candy, and ice-cream in seven candy stores, in a very poor district in New York City, each week, and we found that it amounted to

One Hundred and Seventy-Five Dollars a Week. Near by there was a large Sunday school, and a short calculation showed that each of these candy stores took in each week a larger sum than was given at the Sunday school. The amounts that are spent in cities and towns in such small purchases are really astonishing, and show that, even among the poor, there is a good deal of spare money. But if children have such a large measure of that latent financial power,

I Have Said Enough Now to call attention to the

importance of this financial matter in our schools, and will go on to give a few particulars as to the methods of giving and the object of our contributions. First, as to the objects to which we should give. Some schools eat up all their offerings, using the money to pay for helps, Sunday school papers, and the like. These schools plead poverty, and say that they have no one to lean on for their support, and therefore are forced to eat up their own collections. This is an evil. No school should consume on itself *all* that it collects. If the school be really poor, it still should reserve at least a part of what the teachers and scholars give, to send the gospel to others. If the school is in connection with a church, let the leaders

Call on the Church to Pay for Their Supplies. If they call loud enough and often enough, the result will be that they will be heard and answered. Many a church fails to support its school only because it is ignorant that the school needs the help, and the duty of the church's supporting its own school has never been sufficiently pressed home on the members.

Let a committee wait on the board of church officers, and present their cause. Let the teachers and officers talk the matter up in the congregation, and let their wants be known. Let them show a willingness to take their share of the burden, and make some sacrifice so that the school may be well supplied with all that it needs. In this way, in time, the church will come up to its duty in this matter, and the pennies and quarters

of the scholars will be free to go to those who need them more than they do themselves.

If the Church Cannot Give All That is Needed, let it do what it can, and then take a part of what the school gives to make out the rest. The balance (which should be as large as possible) should then go to some worthy cause outside of the school. This will give the scholars something unselfish to work for, and that will not only stimulate them to give, but will prove a blessing to them, for what Jesus said is still true, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It trains them to unselfishness, and when they grow to years of maturity they will have formed a habit of giving that will be apt to cling to them for the rest of their lives.

Inform the School in Detail what is done with its gifts. If you give to the boards of your church, let the scholars be told (and that frequently) where those boards are working, and to what the money that the school gives is apportioned. Even the youngest scholars can be interested in mission work in India, if they know that their money goes to support a girl in some mission school there, and if a letter from the missionary is read to the school from time to time. Get some wide-awake returned missionary to address the school, from time to time, and see if it does not wonderfully stimulate the offerings of your scholars. Then

Have an Annual Meeting (or better a quarterly

meeting), in which full reports are given of the amounts collected, and the way in which they have been expended. These meetings need not usurp the place of the school session (indeed, it is bad to allow them to do so), but can be supplementary to the school session, which on those days may well be shortened a little. The result will be intelligent giving, which is the best kind of giving that I know of.

Take a Collection Every Week. — Some schools do this only once a month. This is better than nothing, but not a quarter as good as once a week. Giving once a week hurts no one, and it is a great deal easier to give a cent once a week than than to give four cents once a month. Let the offering be anounced each Sunday of what is given that day, or, if the school is too large to allow of this, then let it be done the following week. In this way the interest of the school is kept alive, and if the offerings are falling off attention can be called to it in time.

Do Not Let the Scholars be Treasurers in the classes, as it leads them into temptation, especially if they are allowed to keep the sums contributed for four weeks before they hand them in. This is a very bad system, and yet I have found it existing in some schools. I have no sort of doubt that in this stupid way a good deal of money is stolen. We have no right to put temptation in the scholar's way in such a manner. Let the teacher be the treasurer, and each Sunday let

the money be passed into the hands of the general Sunday-school treasurer, and let him be obliged to give strict account of all that he receives and expends. There is no reason why we should be foolish when we handle the Lord's money, when we are wise in the handling of our own.

Print a Treasurer's Account Every Year, and let each member of the school have a copy. This will not cost much, and if you have a boy in your school who owns a printing press, he may be glad to do it for nothing. But in this way you scatter information, and raise interest, and the people will see that you are wide-awake in your school. Everybody loves wide-awake things, and if your school gets a reputation for being bright and progressive, it will help the school in many ways.

Discuss This Whole Matter in the Teachers' Meeting. — In this way the teachers will have an opportunity to give expression to their thoughts and ask questions, so that when they adopt any of the suggestions that are made they will do it intelligently. Many a reform movement in our schools fails of success because it is sprung on the teachers before they know anything about the whys and wherefores of the movement. This is evil. As a result they fail heartily to co-operate, and the effort proves abortive. This in turn leads them to discount the next advance movement, and in time the school becomes so stationary that is impossible to make

it get out of its ruts. In our own school we never made any advance movement unless we carried it by a large majority of the teachers, for we thought that we had better postpone such plans until we had convinced nearly all the teachers of its advisability. Then we went ahead, and were sure to make it a success.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GRADED SCHOOL.

THE GRADED SCHOOL IS MY THEME FOR THIS CHAPTER. — This theme is not one of prime importance for small schools, for in them the evils of a lack of grading are not very great. Yet even in them it is well to have some system in this matter. But in large schools the importance of right grading is very great.

You would never think this to be the case, if you looked at some schools that I know of, where things are so managed that one might judge grading to be of no importance at all. In some such schools scholars are put into classes in a hap-hazard kind of a way, with results that are disastrous in the extreme. It would really seem that the superintendent had no system at all by which he governed his action in this matter.

If a scholar brings with her a friend, and begs to have her put into the same class, it is done entirely irrespective of any consideration as to whether the newcomer is fit for that class. As a result I have known scholars of such divergent ages as eleven and nineteen to be in the same class. This is a great evil, and betokens very careless supervision.

WORK OF THIS KIND HAMPERS THE TEACHER. —

How can she teach when the class is so incongruous in capacities? What will suit the eleven-year-old child will not meet the wants of the one nineteen years old. The result will be that, in trying to do the impossible, the teacher will fail, and as like as not soon resign. Many resignations that come to the superintendent arise from just such causes as this, and the superintendent who blames the teacher is really himself to blame for allowing such a state of things to exist.

A Further Evil Result is found in the indifference of scholars in such a school. They know well enough that in the public school things are managed more sensibly, and they feel as though they did not want to remain where more sense is not shown. So they stay away, and that with at least some measure of good reason. They may not state this as the cause of their failure to attend, but the fact remains all the same. So teachers and scholars come and go, and the cause abides permanently, whereas, if the cause were to be removed, there would be much more stability among teachers and taught.

But as Soon as Any One Speaks of Grading there will arise, in the minds of *many*, *difficulties*. Yes, I admit that, but if we are to stop in our work as soon as we encounter a difficulty we might as well give up all work at once. One of these difficulties arises from the affection of scholars for a given teacher. They threaten to leave the school if anything is done to part

them from their teacher. Or else the difficulty arises on the part of the teacher, who objects to parting with some of her scholars. Or it may be that the scholar is opposed to uniting with the class to which he is assigned. All these are real difficulties, which lie in the path of the grading of a school. But they are not by any means insurmountable, as experience has proved.

Again it may be claimed that this work of grading, and of consequent transferrals from time to time, makes much work, and that the superintendent has not the time for so many additional cares. This is no real objection, for the remedy is close at hand, and is found in the election of additional officers, so that the whole burden of work may not fall on the shoulders of one man. Surely that is easy, is it not?

Now Look at the Reasons Why a School Should be Graded. — In the first place, this is the dictate of common sense. All admit this, up to a certain point. For all schools are in a measure graded. All have, for example, the primary, and intermediate, and the senior grades. But here many stop, and fail to grade any more carefully than this. But in all our public schools the result of much experience is that more careful grading than this is an absolute necessity.

If that is so in secular schools we may be sure that the same is true in Sunday schools. The scholars themselves will be pleased to see that methods to which they have become accustomed in their daily life are adopted in their Sunday instruction. If they find that

the Sunday school is backward in these matters they will secretly despise that branch of their education.

The Testimony of All Teachers who have tried the graded system is to the effect that they do much better work, and that, too, much more easily with graded than they ever did with ungraded classes. This ought to be sufficient to convince any one of the excellence of this method. No teacher who has ever tried a properly graded class will want to go back to one that is poorly graded.

An Ounce of Experience is Worth a Pound of Theory. — So I will give in detail the experience of one school that I know of, in the hope that it may be of much value to those who desire to do better work in their own schools. The school in question was a large one. It had one primary class, a large one, many intermediate classes, not well graded, and a senior department. But the divergence of ages in the intermediate classes was great, and in the primary classes were many who could not read, with many that could. The scholars in the intermediate department dropped out largely before they reached the senior ranks. So the superintendent, after much thought, prepared a blank which he sent to all his teachers. It read as follows: —

Dear Friend: I see that in your class are scholars ranging from to years of age. I am sure that you must find it difficult to teach scholars of such diverg-

ent ages. May I suggest that hereafter your class grade reach from, say, eleven to fourteen, or twelve to fifteen, or thirteen to sixteen, as the case might be? This will not involve your losing any of your present scholars, but it means that hereafter no child will be put into your class under eleven, and none be retained over fourteen. If you agree to this plan, please let me know, and I will grade your class accordingly.

Yours very sincerely,

———.

This Was Given to Every Teacher in the School. Out of the whole number only two or three responded favorably. Two or three were quite indignant, and answered that they wanted their classes to be let alone. All the rest in no way condescended to respond at all. So the superintendent graded the classes of those who had consented to it, and waited patiently for some months, to let the plan work.

At the end of that time he asked the teachers who had tried the plan to make a report in the teachers' meeting as to how it had worked. They all reported most favorably, some saying that they had never had such good success in teaching before. He then quietly said, "If any more of the teachers desire to have their classes graded, they may apply to me and I will be happy to do it for them." About half the teachers responded favorably, and their classes were added to the number of graded classes.

Again a Pause of About Six Months. Then the matter was once more alluded to in the teachers' meeting, and those who had tried the plan since the last meeting were called upon to report. Their report was so good that at last every single teacher in the school consented to try the new measure, so that the whole school came under the uniform regulations. Ever since that they have worked on the "graded system," and now, if any one should propose to return to the old method, there would be a great outcry in that school against such a step.

The Result is That the Classes Are Graded about as follows: Two primary classes. In the one go all who cannot read. In the second, those who can read easy words when printed on the blackboard. As soon as they can read with facility they are transferred to the intermediate school, where they are put into such classes as their ages fit them for. In the intermediate grade, all classes are graded according to age, the ages stretching over three years, as, for example, eleven to fourteen, twelve to fifteen, thirteen to sixteen, etc. Of course in a large school there will be several classes graded from eleven to fourteen, both among the boys and the girls. In this way provision is made by which scholars of about the same intelligence can be kept together, and so the work of the teacher be facilitated.

Juniors Are Those Who Are Over Sixteen Years of Age, and all who reach that age are gradu-

ated into that department. Then come the seniors, who are from eighteen years of age onward. Now, this plan has some modifications which experience has shown to be wise. If a teacher has shown power enough to hold her class of, say, eleven to fourteen years of age for a series of years, and they are now all ready to go into a higher grade, instead of promoting them all away from her and giving her a new class, all that is done is to raise the age grade of her class, to thirteen to sixteen years, so that she keeps all her old scholars. Teacher and class go up together. I have seen a class thus go on bodily to the junior grade and then again to the senior department, much to the advantage of teacher, scholars, and school.

But How About the Unwillingness of scholars and teachers to part when they must? This very seldom occurs, after the school once appreciates that it is for the best of all concerned. At the same time in the school to which I have referred, no scholar was ever transferred to a higher grade, without consultation with the teacher first. If there was any especial reason why that particular scholar should be held for awhile longer, it was always done. For the spiritual welfare of the scholar must always override any mere regulations of the school. But such cases are rare and can be well cared for as they arise.

Such Transfers as we Have Alluded to Above should be made once a year. Probably the best time

of the year is the close. If this be not often enough it may be made twice a year, but to do it more frequently than this would not be wise. There is always some little necessary disturbance in the process, and it is well to minimize that as much as possible. Then, too, each transfer involves the rewriting of all the class rolls, and in a large school that is quite a piece of work. But once a year is necessary, if the school is to feel the best results of the system.

Of Course Such a System Involves care in putting new scholars into any class. If you have a new applicant and she is twelve years old, you will not put her into a class whose age grade is nine to twelve for that would involve her transferral in one year at the furthest. It would be better to put her into a class whose age grade was twelve to fifteen, for this would allow her to remain under that one teacher for three years. This in itself is an advantage for teacher and scholar, as you will readily see.

Under Whose Charge Ought All These Transferrals to be? In small schools the superintendent may well take charge of them. But in large schools of four to ten hundred scholars his time will not permit him to do work of this kind. He ought to have the most competent person in his school as assistant superintendent and to him (or her) delegate this most important duty. In many schools you have as teacher some public school teacher. She is just the one to do work

of this kind. For, in the first place, she believes in promotions, and, in the second place, she has had experience in work of this kind. She probably knows child nature better than the superintendent himself, and can do better than he can. The very fact that she is a woman will enable her to handle the lady teachers better than a man can do. In our school this work was entirely done by a lady, and it was admirably accomplished.

But Does All This Pay? So asks the conservative superintendent. Yes, I reply, it pays well. It is a good deal of trouble at the first, but as soon as it is in working order you will find that your whole school feels the impulse of the forward movement. Teachers and scholars alike will praise the new order of things, and find that they can accomplish much better work under it, and with much less friction, than under the old haphazard way of doing things. All schools that have tried it bear the same witness, and why should our school be an exception? If you want "the best" do not shun the trouble that it costs. But, of course, if you are satisfied with a poorer way, all you have to do is to stick to your old method, and you will have it, and a poor school besides.

If Now You Want to Begin and grade your own school remember that it is not the work of a week or a month. The teachers have so far been accustomed to the old way, and you will find it hard to make them accept a change. It will never do to "ordain" a

change simply by virtue of your authority as superintendent. You must discuss the question with them, and explain how it will work, and what are the advantages that will come to them as the result of the new method. Even then you will find, as I did, that many of them will show but languid interest in the whole matter, while some will be sure to oppose it altogether. Then what shall you do? Wait patiently, and try it in those classes that are willing to make the experiment.

Then After Weeks of Trial bring the matter up again, and let those who have made the advance report, and you will be sure to find that such report will stimulate others to make the experiment in their own classes. In this way, in due time, the whole school will fall into line, and the end will be that you will have a well-graded school.

Much Importance is to be Placed on the choice of the right individual to carry out the details of this scheme. If you have (as I had) a public school teacher in your school, put it into her hands. She will be in sympathy with the movement from the start, and this is a good point. From the fact that she had to think of these matters in her own daily life, they will come to her more easily, and she will avoid certain points of needless friction.

You will need the *suaviter in modo*, as well as the *fortiter in re*, to carry your plan to a successful issue, and no one has this in larger measure than a wise and

godly public school teacher. In many schools there are several such workers, and the pity of it is that their peculiar talents are not more frequently employed on just such details of Sunday school management. Use them, therefore, and be thankful that God has given you such grand co-workers.

Is it All Done Now? No, you have only made a good "start." Many a school has gone into the "grading system," only to give it up after awhile through pure carelessness. It must be kept up year in and year out. All new scholars will have to be treated in conformity with the plan adopted, and all transfers and promotions will have to follow the general plan. This involves, as I have said above, much work, especially at certain times of the year. This is why I advocate the putting of this department in the hands of some competent person whose sole business it is. She will have enough to keep her busy, if the school is at all large. In very large schools she will have to have an assistant. But, by degrees, the whole thing will become a part of the recognized life of the school, and will produce the good results that always come from intelligent and persistent work for the good of others.

Finally, How Far Should This Grading Go, and how many subdivisions should be made? This will depend on the size of the school, and also on the structure of the Sunday school room. In large schools it may well go thus far: —

Primary one, for all who cannot read.

Primary two, for all who can read easy words.

Intermediate, for all who can read fairly well in the Bible, whatever their age. Of course, of such classes there will be quite a number in almost every school.

Junior classes, for all over fifteen years of age. These should, as far as possible, sit in some part of the schoolroom by themselves.

Senior classes, for all over eighteen years of age. These should have classrooms, if possible, but if that be not feasible, then they and the juniors should occupy some part of the room especially assigned to them.

In some schools there could well be added a normal class for the training of those who intend to become teachers. This would have to meet by itself, and could do so in almost any school, by adjourning to the church, or lecture-room, or pastor's study, as soon as the devotional part of the service is ended. But most schools cannot have such a normal class, and so we have not said much about it in this brief article.

Every school, however, will have to make its subdivisions to suit its own peculiar wants and circumstances, and my only plea here is for careful grading of some sort, carried out after careful study of the conditions of the school, and adhered to after it has been adopted.

CHAPTER XV.

A POINT OF ORDER.

AND NOW, TO CHANGE MY THEME, let me speak on a subject on which I have lately received a number of letters, namely, the matter of getting and keeping order in a Sunday school. Some people think that in a word or two you can impart to them a specific remedy for disorder. This cannot be done. The matter of order is one of detail, like so many other things. Much must be made to cooperate in securing this excellency.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE SUPERINTENDENT must make up his mind that he wants and will have order. Unless he does this, all else will be vain. If he is satisfied with disorder, he will have that, for it is not hard to get. It will come of itself. But if he is not content with the order that he has, he will seek for a better, and this will lead him to "make an effort." What is perfect order? I call that perfect order at the opening the school that permits you to hear a fair-sized clock at the other end of the room tick. Nothing else is "perfect" order. Now the question is, "How can this be secured?"

IT CANNOT BE SECURED UNLESS THE TEACHERS are

determined that it shall be. The superintendent alone cannot accomplish it. He must, then, have a meeting of the teachers at which the question of order is discussed, and all resolve that they will cooperate with their leader in securing perfect quiet. When the teacher force has made up its mind that it wants better order, and will cooperate in securing it, half of the battle is won. Yet it may even now be lost, after all. For it is one thing to resolve to do a thing in meeting, and another to carry that resolve out. I have seen many a resolution fail in its execution.

In Carrying Out the Resolve that you want better order, the first thing is to observe that resolution *yourself*. The teacher, then, who wants good order in his class must be early at school, so as to welcome the first scholar and keep him busy in some way till the others arrive and the school is opened. Many a class, being in the school some time before the teacher arrives, gets "going," and when the teacher comes he finds things already at sixes and sevens. To subdue this disorder (for which he himself is responsible) is then hard, if not impossible. Forestall the evil and it will not arise.

In the Next Place, the Teacher Himself must set the example of order. Yet I have seen many teachers who, after the bell has rung, have kept on talking to some other teacher, "just to finish what I was talking about," and all the time the superintendent

was "waiting." This is all wrong. The very moment that the bell sounds all conversation, selecting of books, and business of every kind should STOP AT ONCE.

For How Can You Expect Your Class to stop talking if you don't set them the example? Practice is stronger than precept, and you will call in vain for order if the teachers do not respond instantly to the call.

The same is true of all the officers in the school. The moment that bell sounds ALL business should cease, and each person sit down in the seat nearest to them, and stay there till the signal is given that again allows them to move. Is this rather strict? Yes; but without it you cannot have perfect order. The bell means what? It means "pay attention to the platform." If, then, you decline to do this, you are a rebel against order yourself, and the scholars will follow your example. Do you see this?

Having Secured the Co operation of His Teachers, the superintendent must be sure that he keeps order himself. He must go to the platform ALL READY. Hymns must have been picked out before he went there, and all detail business must have been attended to. When he goes to the platform he does so to open the school, and he should attend to nothing else. Yet I have seen superintendents who selected their hymns and consulted with the music leader or

secretary about some matter of detail, and that even after they had rung the bell for order. Of course they never got real order, for they set an example of disorder themselves and the school followed it.

In Calling for Order, whether it be by bell or by voice, the leader should call only once. But if the school does not render obedience, then what? WAIT. I say, WAIT. And not call again? NO. Wait till the school comes to order. How long should you wait? Till the school obeys. I myself waited once for full five minutes before the school obeyed. That seemed like five eternities. But at last it quieted down, if for nothing else than from curiosity to know why I did not begin. Then I quietly said, "We have lost five minutes. Let us sing hymn No. 23." The next time I did not have to wait for so long, and before many weeks passed the signal for order was heeded at once.

I was once in a large school in New York where the superintendent had an electric bell with which to call for order. The school was allowed much liberty before it was called to order, so that the scholars had gotten into quite a gale among themselves. When he wanted to begin he gave a great roll on the electric bell. But the school paid no attention. Then he cried out, "The school must come to order." Bnt they paid no heed to that, either. Then came the r-r-r-r-r-r of the bell again and renewed efforts with the voice. I counted how many times he rang or called. It amounted to EIGHTEEN times. And did he get order? Certainly

not, for the school had been trained, so to speak, to disregard his signals, and there was no more reason why they should pay attention to the eighteenth rather than to the first.

Of Course This Means That You Must Never Scold in order to get order. You will never succeed in that way. Keep yourself in hand and be quiet and your influence will be felt in the school most powerfully. Scolding always makes the whole school feel uncomfortable, and that is not the right way in which to begin your devotional service. Whatever you do on the platform, NEVER SCOLD.

At times, if there is a class that does not obey orders, it may be needful to speak to that class. But then it should be done in a pleasant way. You can say, with a smile, "We are waiting for Miss ——'s class." Or, if it be one particular scholar who is unruly, you can say, "Now, Charles, please." You will find this abundantly effective, and will not have to repeat it often. I know this, for I have tried it.

In a Rough School, Made up of Unruly Elements, the worst measure that I ever was forced to adopt, when a given scholar would not yield to treatment such as is suggested above, I had to say, "This session of the school is suspended till Henry comes to order." Then I sat down and waited till he obeyed. But all this was very quietly done. And did it succeed?

Most certainly, for no scholar can bear having the attention of the whole school thus riveted on him. It will break the stoutest heart. But such drastic measures are not often called for. I have only twice been forced to use them.

All This Will be Vain, However, if, after you have called for order, you allow the doors to be open while you are trying to get quiet. Yet I have seen this absurd experiment tried in many schools. It never yet succeeded. And why? Simply because you, yourself, after calling for order, invited disorder by leaving the doors open for late-comers to enter and disturb the school. Whose fault is this but yours? When, then, you have rung your bell let the doors be closed, so that those who are on hand may not be disturbed by those who want to come in late. This is a *sine qua non* of order.

You need not keep the doors closed through all your devotional service. Let them be opened at proper intervals, and then while the late-comers go to their seats DO NOTHING, but wait quietly. When order is restored go on with the business of the school.

But I Hear Some Superintendent Say, "My teachers would not stand such a rule as that. If they were not allowed to come in just as soon as they arrive they would resign." That may be, if you do not consult them and get their consent to such a rule before you try to enforce it. But if you have had such a

teachers' meeting as I suggested at the beginning of this article, and they have themselves agreed to the rule, you will not be troubled by any resignations. They will themselves see its reasonableness and acquiesce in it. Always get your teachers' intelligent consent to any new regulation, and they will give you no trouble; but if you go ahead and, without their consent, give your commands, they will very likely rebel, and you will have your pains for your gains.

One Thing More. Have a fixed time for the opening of your school, and stick to it closely. Open on the tick. Never mind who is there or who is not. Open when the minute comes. I once went into a school at two o'clock and asked, "At what time do you begin?" The secretary replied, "*About* half past two." It proved, as I had expected from his answer, that they actually opened at 2.45, and even then very few of the scholars were on hand. They were being trained in that school to be on hand *about* half past two, and that meant *about* a quarter to three.

Of course, there was no order in that school, because there was none about the superintendent. What else could you expect? He trained the school not to punctuality, but to *aboutness*. And he succeeded.

Now, if Any Superintendent will heed the rules given above, he will succeed in getting and in keeping order in his school. It may take some time, especially if his predecessor has been slack in these matters, but

it will come in time, and both he, and the teachers, and the scholars as well will rejoice much in the result. It is a mistake to think that scholars enjoy a disorderly school. They do not. They rather despise it, for it compares unfavorably with what is expected from them in their own public school. They much prefer order, and the results that you can achieve in the line of teaching are, of course, far in advance of any that you can reach in any other way. Try it, and you will bear this same witness.

CHAPTER XVI.

PREMIUMS AND REWARDS.

AT EVERY SUNDAY-SCHOOL CONVENTION, when there is a question-box, some one asks whether it is right to offer rewards in Sunday schools. And if the reply is in the affirmative, the question is asked whether in this way we do not bribe the children to do what they ought to do without such motives.

Now, in all this question of rewards let us at once get rid of this objectionable term of "bribery," for, since the purpose of offering rewards is to secure commendable action, it cannot by any stretch of language be rightly called "bribery." We can only bribe a person to do a wrong action, never a right one. So let this term be laid on the shelf as totally inapplicable to this whole matter.

YET, EVEN THEN, you will find some people who will contend that by rewarding a child for doing that which it is his duty to do you are arousing base motives, and in this way are really doing more harm than good. They say, "The child ought to learn his lessons and behave, without any such inducements." This we at once admit. But children ought to do many things without any motive other than that of con-

science, which, nevertheless, they do not do. If we never put inducements before children, other than those of stern duty, they will find life much harder than they now do, and we shall find them much more difficult to manage than they now are.

But, as a Matter of Fact, while conventions discuss this question, the majority of schools do give rewards in some form or other. Some confine them to Christmas gifts. To say that these gifts are not intended as rewards is not at all to the point, for, whatever the teachers intend, the children universally take them as rewards, and, for this purpose, about Christmas-time we see large numbers of children crowding into our large mission schools.

Some schools offer premiums for the bringing in of new scholars, others for the learning of lessons, others for deportment, or for punctuality, or, lastly, for written examination work done by the scholars. But, whatever be the particular method adopted, it remains true that in a large majority of Sunday schools rewards are made use of in one way or another.

Now, in All Our Work, if we can find out on what principles God works, and follow his example, we shall not be far out of the way. In the Bible we find that God recognizes the principle of rewards and punishments from beginning to end. And not only in grace, but in nature as well, he gives to him that does well, and recognizes his efforts by an appropriate prize.

This is what constitutes the stimulus that the man of science feels, as he delves among the secrets of nature. This, too, is what the believer feels as he bears the burdens of life, and realizes that one day God, who is not slow to remember his labor of love, will reward him. Even our blessed Master himself was obedient, he having regard unto the recompense of the reward. And our blessed Lord was, in some measure, influenced by this same desire for reward, for of him we read: "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the crown, despising the shame" (Heb. 12 : 2).

But in All This Matter of Divine Prize Giving, note the principle on which God works. He does not give his best gifts to ONE person, leaving all the rest to go without any prize, or, at the best, with a second and third prize. This is the way in which many schools act, and, as a consequence, do more harm than good. This is the way in which the writer began in his own school. But it is not God's way. God sets up a reasonable standard, and then all who attain that standard receive the same recognition. This, then, is the true principle on which to work in the matter of Sunday-school rewards. Place your standard, and make it one that is reasonable. Then give to any scholar who attains that standard the same prize.

This Will Not Prevent your having as many grades of excellence as you think best, as, for example, for the Primary, the Intermediate, and the Senior De-

partments of the school. But it will involve the giving of a similar reward to all who attain to any given standard. It will also at once prevent that jealousy that so often arises when a single prize is offered, and one of two scholars, of nearly equal ability, carries it off, and leaves the other with very inadequate recognition of his efforts. I have seen more harm than good arise from such a procedure, followed by a refusal even to try again the next year.

Even Under These Safeguards we shall find that some wrong is unintentionally done at times. Nor can we ever exactly suit the reward to the merit of the scholar, as God does in his government of this world. For one scholar of dull apprehension may, in reality, deserve a larger reward for the same results than another of quick wits. But this should not prevent us from trying, so far as possible, to approximate to God's way of rewarding our scholars. All things human are imperfect, but still we strive to reach as great a degree of perfection as we can, and do not on that account give up the attempt.

CHAPTER XVII.

ENTERTAINMENTS.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IS A COMPLEX ORGANIZATION. — In order to have a perfect school, there are many details which have to be regulated and wisely cared for. Not only do we aim to reach the scholars' souls so that they may become followers of the Lord Jesus, but we also try to educate their minds so that they may have a competent understanding of the word of God, and of all that bears upon it. But our scholars have other instincts besides these, and Sunday-school workers have long recognized that there is a legitimate effort in their work for entertainments.

IN THIS CHAPTER, THEREFORE, I shall speak about various kinds of Sunday-school entertainments which are in vogue, some of them helpful, and some not. With regard to this matter, it is perfectly possible to make use of a certain class of entertainments in a way to help the work of the school. It is also possible to use the same thing in such way as shall hinder, and not help.

Experience is our best guide along these lines. By experience I do not mean our own experience only, but the experience of other workers who have tried experi-

ments, and have tested their character. He is truly wise who learns from others and profits by their mistakes, for in that way he prevents himself from doing many things which are unfitting. He who must learn everything by his own bitter experience pays dear for his education.

Nearly Every Sunday School in the Land has some kind of Christmas entertainment. Many of these are exceedingly helpful. At the same time, I am obliged to say that many of them have more of "tomfoolery" than of spirituality about them. I speak here from somewhat wide experience, having learned much by bitter mistakes which I myself have made. There are, I suppose, many hundreds of Sunday schools who have "Santa Claus" appear at their anniversary.

Generally there is a good deal of buffoonery concerning his advent. He comes out clad in grotesque costume, gets off many jokes and foolish remarks. The thoughts of the children are entirely drawn away from the Christ-child to this semi-heathen individual. At a time when we should be thinking of God's love as manifested in the birth of the babe at Bethlehem our attention is entirely taken up with things foreign to this blessed event.

There are Many Evils Connected with Such an Abuse at Christmastide. Among other things is the fact that we in some measure deceive the younger children, to whom everything is "real." A little child,

lying on its deathbed, who had thus been deceived in various ways, and then, as the years went by, undeceived, asked its mother the question, "Mother, is *Jesus real?*" What business have we, as Sunday-school workers, thus to represent things in such light that our little ones are deceived?

It Seems to Me That on Christmas Day nothing should be presented to the school but what pertains strictly to this anniversary. There is enough about the life of our Lord Jesus, from the cradle to the grave, to keep the attention of our scholars most helpfully. For example, Christmas exercises might be gotten up with responsive readings from the account in Matthew and Luke. These, interspersed with appropriate hymns, and followed by one or two pertinent and brief addresses, will be quite sufficient to entertain and instruct the school. If, in addition to this, the Christmas tree be decorated and presents be distributed, the scholars will be contented and happy.

In Some Schools They Prepare Very Elaborate Dialogues, which are delivered in costume. Now, I do not deny that these are attractive, but I very much fear they are not profitable. Oftentimes they have no reference at all to the event which gathers the school together, and then they are certainly more than worthless. All that comes onto the platform at this season should bear directly on the event which took place in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago.

One of the Evils of These Elaborate Entertainments is found in the fact that they demand much time in preparatory rehearsals. I have known schools whose regular session was practically taken up for weeks before Christmas with the music, the declamations, the dialogues that were to be presented on that night. During these weeks but little attention is paid to the lesson, and this in itself is a great evil.

Moreover, Jealousies and Unseemly Rivalries are Awakened. — Scholars who receive prominent parts are proud, others angry; thus a spirit is cherished entirely alien from that which should be cultivated at this season of the year.

In a Great Many Sunday Schools the Sunday-school concert occupies a very prominent place in the activities of the scholars. Some have them every month, and the time generally is Sunday evening. These Sunday-school concerts may be made an occasion of very great advantage, not to the school only, but to all its friends. The various publishing houses have spent much time and given much thought to the preparation of the printed programs for such entertainments.

Here, too, however, we must guard ourselves against the theatrical and the exaggerated. Simplicity is to be sought, for in simplicity there is very great power. The theme around which the concert circles should be a scriptural one, and every effort should be made to

leave a strong religious impression on all who have been present. City Sunday schools make but little use of these Sunday school concert exercises, but it is not for them alone I write, and, therefore, I try in some measure to meet the wants of all engaged in Sunday school work.

Every Sunday School That Is Well Conducted makes use of "sociables." There is no way in which we can get as well acquainted with each other as we can on these festive occasions. In large Sunday schools, it often happens the teachers hardly know each other. They come from different homes, from different parts of the city, and excepting at the Sunday school and church services, many of them never meet face to face. This is an evil which can be, in some measure, at least, remedied by these sociables.

In Such Socials As These, care should be taken that the younger element does not run into too mnch frivolity. Give the young people latitude, but see that their liberty does not run into license. Throughout all these sociables there should run an earnest Christian spirit, such as it behooves those to cultivate who are working for their scholars' eternal welfare. Piety is perfectly consonant with cheerfulness, but piety and folly never went well together. There is a laughter which is whole-souled and wholesome, and there is a laughter like that of fools, which is like "the crackling of thorns under a pot."

If Once In a Quarter, Say, the teachers come together, and, after short devotional services, have some slight refreshment, and then give over the rest of the evening to social intercourse, they will find the influence extremely helpful in their work. The timid teacher will find strength in the added acquaintance which comes to him at these times. A sense of sympathy is aroused, and the teachers feel that they are part of one little army which is banded together to fight for the welfare of their scholars.

The teachers here will exchange their experiences and many a discouraged one will pluck up heart again as she finds she is not alone in her trials and burdens. It is sometimes well to have some outsiders present to make an address to the teachers on a theme germane to their work. New light is thrown on the work in this way, and fresh information gathered, which redounds to the welfare of the school.

In Addition to Teachers' Sociables, it is well sometimes to have sociables with the scholars. In very large schools it is impossible to have the whole school together at these times. A sociable for a thousand scholars, for instance, would be an impossibility. In such cases it may be well for teachers of two or three classes to combine, and using the church parlors, have an entertainment for their scholars. In all large schools there are single Bible classes of thirty to fifty members, and these may well have sociables by themselves. If the class be a young men's Bible class, each member

may be allowed to invite one lady friend. In nearly all such cases, the expense of the sociable can be borne by the class itself. In the case of the younger classes, other provisions will have to be made.

If There Be No Church Parlors that can be used for this purpose, it may be that teachers will invite scholars to their own homes. Indeed, a social under your own roof has something more of hospitality in it than one held in church parlors, be they ever so finely decorated.

In Small Schools, However, of one hundred to one hundred and fifty members, it may be well once in awhile to hold a sociable for the whole school. Then, doubtless, the lecture room of the church would be the proper place to use. For an entertainment like this, it is generally necessary to appoint an "Entertainment Committee." A kindly watch will have to be kept over this committee, lest they, too, adopt games, dialogues, or charades which are not helpful. There will be no difficulty, however, in this matter, providing the oversight be kindly and sympathetic, as well as judicious.

This Brings up the Matter of Friction, which often arises between the older and younger members of a school. The older teachers are apt to be conservative, perhaps too much so. The younger are sure to be radical. When opinions differ as to the character of any entertainment, discord arises and there is apt to be

trouble. Let the older ones remember that they, too, were once young. A sanctified use of memory to recall how you felt when you were eighteen or twenty years old will help matters very much. Let the discussion concerning this disputed question be kindly and gentle.

Results will thus be reached that will be in some measure satisfactory to all. If angry words and vituperation be indulged in, more harm will be done than can be remedied by a half year of earnest work. What Satan most loves is to see a Sunday school fighting with itself.

Parent's Sociables are Often Very Helpful.—This is especially true in those Sunday schools which reach the working classes in great cities. Parents who never come to church and who never see the inside of a Sunday school will come to an entertainment given in their honor. Here they are brought face to face with the workers; they realize the kindly sympathy which exists for them and their children. Their prejudices are allayed, and their affection and interest awakened. Many a parent has thus been brought into the house of God for the first time who has come and come again, until at last divine truth has savingly laid hold of the heart. We must be all things to all men, so long as we do nothing sinful, and attract them by every means in our power to that place where hallowed influences predominate.

Of Course in all this the financial question will

soon come to the front. Some Sunday schools have an abundance of money, and this question never troubles them. Others find themselves exactly in the opposite position. It is impossible to say what is the best means for raising money in all schools. Sometimes the church officers may be willing to give something from the treasury of the church. At other times the teachers take up a collection among themselves to defray necessary expenses. However this may be, it is not necessary to spend large sums of money for these entertainments. Ice-cream and cake, or lemonade and cake, or (in season) strawberries and cream are sufficient for the purpose in view. It is not so much what we eat at the time as it is the general spirit with which we welcome our guests that wins their hearts.

Most Sunday Schools in the City aim to have a picnic at least once in the year. Sometime a barge is hired for an excursion on the nearest lake or river. At other times a railroad train is chartered, which conveys the Sunday school to the appointed grove. The matters of detail are such as must be settled by each school in accordance with its surroundings.

The main point is to get the children as completely as possible into the country. As there are large expenses connected with some of these picnics, the financial problem again comes to the front. To meet the necessary outlay, a great many schools sell tickets to any who are willing to buy. This is an evil. Our own experience is that, unless the sale of tickets be

carefully restricted, parties are sure to purchase them who make very undesirable associates.

The further result will be that rude conduct annoys and disturbs the quieter element of the Sunday school. Tickets should be sold only to the members of the Sunday school and church, and to their immediate friends, so that all find themselves in the midst of congenial, social companions.

If Competitive Games are Arranged for, they should be in charge of a committee, who should wisely regulate the admission of those who are to take part. I have known delicate girls in the city, who have stood behind a counter for six days in a week, and have never taken much exercise, to be seriously injured by entering for a half-mile race. These girls did not understand the strain on the physical system involved in such running.

The result is that they were totally exhausted and suffered for days the consequences of their rashness. I have known young men from the city, whose occupations have been indoors, to be sunstruck through their carelessness in exposing themselves to a July sun. Care should be taken, therefore, in all these matters, that the outing of the picnic be a real help, and not a serious hindrance to those under our charge.

The Matter of Dancing at these Picnics is almost always sure to come up. If care be not taken, it will be the cause of bitter feelings and needless strife.

I do not know how others feel in this matter, but it seems to me there are amusements enough open to our young people, without their engaging in promiscuous dancing. We have never found it necessary in our school to yield to this pressure, which generally comes from the most worldly portion of the scholars. We have always been rather strict in the amount of liberty which we gave to the scholars.

Great is Common Sense, sanctified by Christian experience, in all this matter of Sunday school entertainments, and it must be steadfastly applied. The leaders should be truly leaders, and not allow themselves to be carried away by the blatant voices of those who are crying for greater liberty.

If Our Hearts are in True Sympathy with the young, they will quickly enough understand our motives, and if we ever err on the side of over-strictness, they will be willing to forgive, because they realize that we are working for their advantage. If our aim is truly religious in all we do, it will show itself, whether in the teaching of the lesson, the Christmas entertainment, the sociable, or picnic. In all these things, we must make it clear that we are seeking first the kingdom of God. If this be so all else will go well.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LIBRARY.

THE LIBRARY IS A VALUABLE ADJUNCT to every Sunday school. Not every family has the means to procure a sufficient supply of reading matter for its members. Books are soon read through, and to keep an active boy or girl in reading matter, year in and year out, is no easy thing. Then, not all who have the means have the *desire* to meet the legitimate wants of the young people, or, if they have the desire, they have not always the requisite *discretion* to furnish good books. As a result, our young people often get hold of books that do far more harm than good.

FROM THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS the Sunday school library has had its origin. The aim has been to supply healthful reading matter to the scholars, and thus supplement the teaching of the lesson. At first only books of a distinctly religious character were admitted to the libraries of our schools. The thought was to provide "Sunday reading," so as to make the Sabbath day not only a delight, but profitable as well. I remember the time when books like "The Life of Henry Martyn" and "The Memoirs of Nathan Dickerman" formed the main part of a proper Sunday school library. How

much the children *read* these books it is not possible to say, but if I may judge from my own experience, they were not very eagerly devoured.

In Time, However, the demand for more interesting reading brought the supply, and we began to be flooded with the "religious novel." At once the cry was raised that we were cultivating in the scholars a taste for "novels," and that in this way more harm was being done than good. The *quality* of this literature was also impugned, and we heard that the Sunday school literature was "goody-goody" and filled with "wish-wash."

That there were unwholesome books published by some firms is undoubtedly true, but a careful examination of the current Sunday school books will convince any candid person that, on the whole, the charge has but little foundation on which to rest. *In the main*, the books issued by the denominational houses are good of their kind and of a good kind. Their influence is wholesome, and far better than that of much that is published by the ordinary secular business house.

Of Course Sunday School Libraries had not long been in existence before the question arose, "*What kind* of books ought to go into a Sunday school library?" There are those who would totally exclude the "religious novel" and all secular works and stick to those of a purely religious character. They claimed that the province of the Sunday school was only to

furnish Sunday reading, and that it had no business to give out secular books on the Lord's Day. On the other hand, there were not lacking those who felt that the "religious novel" had a legitimate place among the books of a Sunday school, provided the moral that it taught was pure and wholesome, and that it was far better that the scholars should read books of that class than those that they would naturally get elsewhere.

Of Course, in a Question of This Nature, it was "many men of many minds," and there was much diversity of opinion. Critics sometimes failed to recognize that what might be good for a "church school," in which the scholars had an abundance of reading matter in their own homes, would not be sufficient for a "mission school," in which the scholars had almost no reading matter in their own homes. They did not seem to realize that the difference between the Sunday school of the "Old South Church" and a mission in the North End was world wide, and that what would suit one would be only ridiculous for the other.

In this way many grievous mistakes were made. I remember well looking into a mission library at one time to see why the books were never taken out. The first volume that I took from the shelves was "Charnock on the Divine Attributes," and the second was "Edwards on the Will." *Then I understood why the scholars never called for any books.* I doubt whether a class made up of Presbyterian elders would have found much use for a library of that kind.

If, Now, Any One Expects Me to lay down a rule by which this much discussed question shall be settled, they will find themselves mistaken. Within the limits of a chapter like this, such a thing is not possible. One thing only I will say, and that is this: I feel that it is a mistake to confine the selection of books to those of a purely religious character.

Good secular books should also be admitted, especially in those schools where the home does not furnish the pupil with reading matter. Then some distinction should be made between books that are recommended for *Sunday* reading and those that are intended for *week-day* perusal. This is not a difficult thing to do. In this way all the wants of the scholars can be well met.

Every Good Library should have a good catalogue. This is a *sine qua non*. The question of the cost often prevents smaller schools from having this requisite. But there is often in the church a boy who has a small printer's outfit, who for the love of the cause will print a small catalogue, covering a library of one or two hundred volumes. If you are not fortunate enough to have such a boy, you should nevertheless aim to secure the needful funds and prepare such a catalogue, for without it the scholars will not know what books there are on your shelves. Such catalogue should be arranged by topics, such as "History," "Biography," "Travel," "Missions," "Fiction," etc.

There Are Plenty of Good Sunday School

Books; and if you only are ready to spend the time and thought, you can procure them for your library. Let me, then, give some simple rules, and promise that if you will rigidly adhere to them the result will be a good library.

1. *Do not buy more than ten*, or, at the most, twenty, books at a time. This will effectually prevent the passing of books by wholesale. There will thus be time for the proper persons to read and approve or reject intelligently. For this have

2. *A Permanent Library Committee.*— Five are enough. Choose this committee carefully. Have some mothers on it. An older sister will do no harm. Let this committee watch the Sunday school papers and gain what help from their reviews they can.

3. *Have a Permanent Library Fund.*— Five dollars a month is enough to provide any school with sixty volumes a year. Where shall this five dollars be raised from? From the church, if possible. If that is not possible, then by private subscription. Ten people who give fifty cents a month will do it. To get ten such people will cost work, you say. Well, what if it does? You can never have any good thing without work.

4. *Duplicate Very Popular Books.*— This will enable the scholars to get the book they want without having their patience exhausted before their turn comes. After the rage of novelty is over, keep only one copy on hand.

5. *Always Replace Standard Books.*— Your scholars change rapidly. A book like "Irish Amy," or "Silver

Rifle," or "Giant Killer" ought always to be in a good library.

6. *Have a Graded Catalogue.*— Do not give young and ignorant scholars a chance to get books that are not suited to their intellectual capacity. Now, of course, all this means care and work. But the result will be such that you will find that your library is a real help to you in all your work with your scholars. A poor library is worse than none, for it only serves to irritate, and so does harm. But a good set of books on your shelves will draw many a scholar to your school and help to keep him there. And is not that one of the things that we are all aiming at ?

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LIBRARIAN.

IN my last chapter I gave some suggestions with regard to the matter of the library. If a good library were all that is needed in this department of Sunday school work, I might pause here and say nothing more. But a good library will not run itself. If placed in the hands of a poor librarian, those who "know" will get much good from it. But those who are ignorant of books will get but little good from its use. It is better to have a rather poor library and a good librarian than a good library and a poor librarian.

YET MANY SCHOOLS act as though the matter of librarian were one of little consequence. Some young man or woman is chosen whose qualifications may be very inadequate, for "it is only the library." The result often is that the library is badly served and the school gets but little out of it. Such schools seem to think that the whole duty of the librarian begins and ends with the giving out and receiving of the books, and, since that is a task that does not call for any particular talent, any one can do it. Such a "haphazard" selection of this important officer is sure to be followed by "haphazard" results.

What Are Some of the Qualifications of a good librarian? They are not difficult to enumerate.

(*a*) *The librarian must love books.* To put into this office a young and careless boy or a giddy girl is to do much damage. There is a great difference in this respect among people. Some young men take naturally to books and really love them. Others care but little for them, and read only those books that are popular and highly spiced. But how can a man serve others well in the library unless he loves his work specifically? He will work in a perfunctory manner, and might as well be replaced by a machine if such an one could be invented for the work.

(*b*) *He must love people.* There are men who love books, but not people. Such are bookworms. But they make wretched librarians. They feel bored by people who come and ask foolish questions or make trouble by their indecision in the matter of choosing books. No such person is a good one to put in charge of the library. He who takes that office should love all classes and conditions of men, so that he can be helpful to those who are ignorant and out of the way.

He must be anxious to help the most illiterate, so that all such may look to him for help and guidance in the matter of choosing books. The love of good books and the love of people will result in the librarian's trying to introduce the one to the other in the most attractive way. This will, of course, increase the circulation of the library, and make it a power for good in the Sunday school to which it is attached.

(*c*) *He must have an exalted idea* of the work to which he is called. If he thinks that the library is one of the subordinate places in the whole round of Sunday school work he will not do good service there. If, on the other hand, he feels that the work that can be accomplished by a good book is second to that of no other instrumentality he will enter upon his work with some enthusiasm, and will exalt his calling. He will feel that if he is instrumental in getting a boy to read a good book the influence of that book may govern that boy's career in all future years.

Of course, if the librarian has such ideals as this he will strive to get all the boys and girls to read that, and that only, which can have a wholesome influence on their lives. In this way he will be a power for good every day in the week.

These are Three of the Chief characteristics of a good librarian. Of course he will have other excellencies, such as promptitude, a kindly courtesy, indefatigable industry, spotless neatness, and the like. If, however, he have the first three graces spoken of, it is most likely that he will also have the others, for he who has the higher virtues is not probably without the lower.

Such a Librarian as We Have Suggested Above will find out what the people want. If books that he has on his shelves, placed there by his predecessors, do not "go," he will try and find out the reason.

He will probably discover that they are not suited to the wants of those to whom the library is supposed to minister.

Now, instead of finding fault with the people, he will find fault with the books, and make up his mind that they are not suited to the needs of the community in which the school is placed. He will realize that there is no more use in finding fault with people for not taking books that they do not like than in finding fault with a horse for not drinking when he is not thirsty. Neither will scolding help in the one case more than in the other.

How Can the Librarian Find Out what the people want? By asking. He can prepare blanks, and ask the people to write on these the names of such books as they would like to have placed in the library. Now, as soon as such a suggestion is made, I fancy that I hear some one exclaim, "Oh, that would never do, for they would ask for bad books!"

First, how do you know that? And, second, if they should, you are not obliged to put them on the shelves simply because they have been asked for. But, third, you will not find that this is the case. People will ask for such books as they want, and, as a rule, you will find that they are good books, and will do less harm than some, perhaps, that are now on your shelves.

Supposing That, as a Result of the issue of such blanks as are suggested above, the people return a list

of books that petrifies the librarian. That he finds that many of the standard works of biography and of missions are not so much as mentioned.

Suppose that the most of the applications for new books show that religious fiction is all the people care for. What then? Shall he give up in despair, and make up his mind that the people are hopelessly wedded to light literature? Not by any means. He has still large scope for usefulness. He can by slow degrees train the people to like better books. As they come to his office and ask for books he can talk with them and make many a good suggestion as to books of which perhaps they have never heard.

One the most important qualifications of the good librarian is the ability to direct the reading of those who come to him from week to week. As soon as they find out that he knows his business they will begin to look to him for guidance. They will ask of themselves what he has that is interesting. This will be a great gain, both to him in his work and to the school in its reading.

The Fact is That, Just Like a Good Salesman, who has good wares, and then finds a market for them, so a good librarian first sees to it that he has what the people want, and then makes the people take that which he has to offer. Yet how many of the young men or women who stand at the window of the library have any such conception of the scope of their duty? All that they think they have to do is to take books off

from the shelves, deliver them to the scholars, and again receive them and deposit them on the shelves once more. The difference between that kind of a librarian and the kind that I have indicated is world-wide.

But the Librarian Can do More Than This.— He can watch the growth of the younger scholars in the school, and when he finds that they will bear some heavier reading can suggest what they had better take. It is true that many children stop drawing books when they have gotten through the "juvenile" period, simply because they do not know what else to call for, and are not told of what stores of rich material there is in the library for older minds.

For such scholars the librarian should be on the look-out, and prove that he loves them by forestalling their wants and ministering to them wisely. In this way they can be led up step by step, till they are able to select books for themselves. All their future lives may thus be influenced by a wise supervision exercised by the "man behind the window." Is this a small thing to do? Nay, we know of no more important work in all the school.

If, Now, Some Librarian into whose hands this falls says, "All this is very well, but I have not the time or opportunity to speak at length to the scholars," we reply, "You will be quite surprised to find how much time you have for this, if you only use what you

have. As for opportunity, you can make opportunity at times other than those when you are at work on Sunday." If there is a will there is a way, here as elsewhere.

As an Aid in getting information before the school, the librarian may well make use of a bulletin board. On this he can post the new books that are purchased from time to time. Or he can recommend through it such books as are appropriate to the lessons for the day, for which teachers will be very grateful.

If the lesson is on temperance, he can call attention to such temperance literature as he has on his shelves. Or, if it be a missionary lesson, he can post the names of the best missionary books that there are in the library. In this way many a book can be gotten into circulation which otherwise would lie idle. Remember, it is not only the number of books that you have, but the frequency of their issue that constitutes a good library. Of what use are unread books? Better ten good ones read than a hundred that are never opened.

One Way in Which the librarian can extend the usefulness of his work is by frequent conference with his pastor. Most probably the minister is the best informed person as to the new books that come out. At all events, he probably knows more than the young librarian who has just been appointed to the office. Suppose that the minister proposes to preach a series of sermons on Bible heroes. The librarian could help

considerably if he knew this and commended such books as bore on the general theme of his pastor. Working together thus, they both could accomplish more than if they worked alone. Could they not?

Of Course a Good Librarian will somehow get book reviews. Such may be had in every good religious newspaper. But if the librarian have not the means to subscribe for a number of such papers, he can by inquiry find out what papers are taken by members of the congregation. They will be only too glad to let him have them, when they have read them, and then he can see what is being published that is new and helpful.

In this way he will keep himself well informed, and will really become an authority on the subject of Sunday school books. Then, when the time comes to select new books, people will turn to him with confidence. One reason why the Sunday school library is so little thought of is just because the librarian is so incompetent, and the people are taught to think little of the possibilities of his department. He himself is often to blame for this.

The Grace of Continuity is a good one for the librarian to cultivate. Many a librarian begins well, and makes a great "spurt." Then he stops and thinks that all is going on well. Better work slowly but steadily than nervously and fitfully. It is the old story of the race of the hare and tortoise. The hare ran like fury for awhile, and far outran the tortoise. But then

he lay down for a little rest and fell asleep. Meantime the tortoise kept steadily on, and presently passed the sleeping hare, and in the end came out ahead.

In all Sunday school work I prefer the deliberate man who keeps at it (only let him not be TOO deliberate). "Hold-on is the horse that is to win," is a good saying.

I Know of No Good Reason why the library should be open only on Sunday. This is indeed the rule, but is it a good one? Many scholars read the book that they drew long before the week is out. Why, then, should they be obliged to wait till Sunday before they can draw again? Besides, there are always some who are necessarily detained from coming to the school each week, and if the library is open on a week-day evening they can avail themselves of its advantages.

Why should not the library be open on the evening of the mid-week prayer-meeting? It could not possibly do any one any harm, and would do much good. It would draw some to come out to the meeting, for the sake of getting a book, who otherwise would stay at home. The librarian could be on hand half an hour before the meeting opened and close at the hour of service. It would, of course, involve some sacrifice on his part, but for what was he elected to that office if not in order that he might be a help to all who want books?

In Large Mission Schools it is becoming more and more the practice to have the library open every day in the week. Of course, such libraries have many

secular books, and the librarian must be a paid official. But the good results from such a practice are so many and great that no one who has tried it will return to the old method of opening the library for one hour on one day of the week. The books do ten times more work on this plan than they do on the old, and that is what we should strive for.

In a Small Sunday School the machinery for distributing and receiving the books may be very simple. But in a school of four to six hundred members you must have a good system. Otherwise you will have disorder, and will of necessity lose many books. What is known as the "Eggleston System" is the best that I have seen for a library of not over two thousand volumes. This system requires the following paraphernalia, but is very simple and easily managed.

Have Grooves Sawed in the Shelves, above and below, opposite to each other. In these fit strips of tin, in this way giving to each book a compartment by itself. Of course, these compartments will have to be made to fit the books. Then fit the books into their compartments, and number each book on the back, and each compartment to match the book. Have another set of shelves arranged in compartments in the same way, with this difference, that the compartments here must all be large enough to take any book in the library. These compartments must be as many as the number of scholars who draw books. Number them from one upward.

To Each Scholar is Issued a card about six inches by three. On the top of this card is printed a number, by which that scholar is to be known, and the name of the scholar and address is written in. The rest of the card is divided into squares, in which the scholar writes the numbers of the books that he desires, in the order in which he wants them. As the particular book that he most desires may not be in, he keeps several numbers on his card, and the librarian gives him that number which is in.

This card the scholar takes home with him always. Another card is prepared for each scholar, having on it a printed number corresponding with the number on that scholar's personal card and the scholar's name, and the rest of the card marked with the months of the year, and against each month the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, corresponding with the possible five Sundays in each month. This is the librarian's card, and never leaves the library. All these latter cards are kept in a long box, in regular numerical order, so as to be easily found when wanted.

Suppose, Now, That the First Named Cards have been issued to the school. Mary Brown wants a book, and brings her card, and presents it at the window of the library. The librarian takes it, and goes to his box in which his other cards are, and picks out the one which has a number corresponding to the number on Mary's card. Then he goes to his shelves, and takes out the book for which Mary has called. In the place

of this book he inserts the card which remains in the library, having first marked off on it the Sunday on which Mary has called for the book.

That shelf is now without a book, but has a card in it showing that Mary Brown has that book. Mary's card is then inserted in the book, and the book put into the vacant compartment that has Mary's number on it. When, then, Mary comes to the window to get her book, all that she has to do is to call her number. The librarian goes at once to that shelf, takes out her book, and hands it to her. In this way he can work with great rapidity and exactitude.

On This Plan, which we used for many years in my school with great success, each compartment of each shelf of the library must have in it always either a book or a card, and the card will show who has that book out and the date on which it was drawn. This is a great advantage, as any one will easily see, and enables the librarian to trace his books with great accuracy and rapidity.

For Libraries of more than two thousand volumes this system will hardly do. But there are so few Sunday school libraries of more than that number of books that it is hardly worth the while to take them into account. If yours is one of them, then the best way for you to do is to learn how great libraries like those of our cities are managed, and govern your own on the same principles.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

BY MRS. S. W. CLARK.

IN DISCUSSING THE NEEDS of the primary department, the first thing we will speak of is the room. The primary class needs a good room. Not a corner of the cellar, where it is dark, nor a room in the garret, where the little ones have to climb long flights of steps to reach it, nor the gallery of the church, where the children have to sit in the pews on high seats and wiggle until school is out.

IN EVERY CHURCH where there are children enough, and these small enough to form a primary class, there ought to be a separate room where the primary teacher can be alone with her class, where they can sing when they please and not disturb the other school, and where the other school will not disturb them.

Rooms that are divided only by glass doors from the large school are also objectionable. The teacher is constantly hindered in her work by being told not to

NOTE. In this chapter I deal with the primary class, and I have asked Mrs. S. W. Clark, of New Jer ey, a most successful primary teacher, to write the "Hints" which follow. She writes out of the fulness of personal work, and I can most heartily recommend all that she says as being thoroughly practical.

sing just then, or please not to recite quite so loud, because they disturb the other school. How can a teacher do her best under such circumstances?

If Your Church Has a Very Large primary department, say two or three hundred, then the church ought to have for their use two or three separate rooms, the department being divided into three classes of three grades.

Having a room, we must endeavor to the best of our ability to make it attractive. Let the floor be level, have it covered with a carpet if you can get it, or a hemp matting. I know this article will reach many teachers who cannot get a new carpet or anything new. Then let the children help make a carpet. They will all be glad to bring something old from home that can be cut up into strips, and how delighted the children will be to sew carpet rags to make a carpet for their own schoolroom. Let them have a little sewing circle for this purpose. Some may think it strange to suggest a rag carpet for a Sunday school floor, but, dear teacher, anything is better than the noise of moving feet, and when the floor is bare the children cannot help making a noise.

Let the Walls of the Room be adorned with mottoes, pictures, texts of different colored paper. It is a good idea to keep one part of the wall for a lesson picture gallery. I mean by this, as you go through the quarter's work, cut each picture out of your picture leaf

cluster, and fasten them on the wall in the order of the lessons. The little ones will be delighted to see them there. They will be constantly studying them, and it will aid very much in your review work. By using these pictures in this way, the picture gallery will be constantly changing. The leaf cluster can be bought for $1.00 a quarter from any Sunday school publishing house. In your windows have plants and flowers, and try in every way to make the room attractive and beautiful. Then the children will love to come to the Sunday school.

The Seating of the Schoolroom is a very important matter. If it is at all possible, have chairs of graded heights. Some teachers prefer low settees. The greatest objection to these is that the children will crowd each other. If you have chairs, each child has his own seat. If you are where you cannot have small chairs or settees, and have to use the high seats of the synagogue, I think the best plan is to cut them down, and make them low enough for the children. If some of the saints have to sit low in the prayer meeting, it may do them good, and perhaps make them willing to put their hands in their pockets and supply the wants of the little ones.

Let There be Plenty of God's beautiful sunlight and plenty of fresh air. I have been in many a room crowded with children where the air was perfectly stifling and every one of the windows shut tight. And

if you try to open one, they stick as if they had not been opened for years. Many times the teacher wonders what is the matter that the children are so restless. She cannot keep their attention. She does not know whether the trouble is with the children or herself, when, in fact, it is neither. It is the want of fresh air.

Now let the teacher open the windows for about two minutes. Let the children stand up, and keep them busy with a brisk calisthenic exercise. The little ones will not take cold if they are kept moving. Then close the windows and have the children say (with motions) one verse of

> We'll all rise up together,
> We'll all sit down together.
> We'll mind the rule of Sabbath school
> And all sit still together.

By this time the little ones will be refreshed, the teacher will be herself again, and the exercises of the school can go on. If the teacher will pay proper attention to the ventilation, the room need never become overheated; let the windows be down from the top, enough to keep the room quite cool, until schooltime. When the children come in from the cold air they do not feel that the room is cold. In all the windows have a board six inches wide placed under the lower sash and shut the sash down on it; this will let in a current of fresh air all the time. In this way the air in the room can be kept pure and fresh, and the children will not be exposed to a draught.

HAVE A RAISED PLATFORM about seven inches, and on it a table with a drawer in it, in which the teacher can keep her small supplies; also a closet for storing papers, pictures, and rolls. A piano or an organ is almost indispensable. A primary class without music is a very dull, unattractive place. To those schools that have no piano, and cannot afford to get a large organ, I would say, you can get a "Mason and Hamlin" baby organ for $22.50.

DON'T CALL THE ROLL. — This method of keeping the attendance is still used in many schools, and it is a very bad one. I have been in many schools and have ached to take the roll book out of the teacher's hand, and tell her to go on with the work of the class. This is what I have heard:

"John?" "Present."

"Mary?" "Present."

"James?" "Present."

"Jane? Jane? Where is Jane? Who knows anything about Jane?"

"Please, ma'am, she is not here."

"What is the matter?"

"She had to stay home to tend the baby."

"Well, let us go on. Lucy?" "Here."

"Joseph?"

"Please, ma'am, he is sick."

Just in this style the roll of about seventy-five scholars was called. I thought to myself: "Oh, how much precious time is being wasted here!"

Just as much, and sometimes more, precious time is wasted in hearing the children say texts or verses. The teacher goes from one child to another, asking: "Do you know your text?"

"No, ma'am."

"Do you?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Can you say it?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Let me hear it."

Then the child stammers through it, with the teacher's help, and so the teacher goes through the class. You may judge how much time there is left for all the rest of the work.

Now Let Me Tell You of a better way. Give to each child, every three months, a small envelope with his register number on each. Have the child bring one each Sunday, and give it to a teacher as he passes into the room. The pennies are to be put into these envelopes before the child comes to school.

If any one forgets his envelope the teacher knows it, and takes down his name or number, and in this way keeps a correct roll. There are many plans that can be used that save time. Some use a numbered quarterly card that has thirteen coupons attached to it, and the child brings one each Sunday. Then some use cards that have the whole twelve months on them, and the child brings this card every Sunday, and, as he passes the door, the teacher punches out the date, so marking

him present. Any method that a teacher can invent for her own use that will serve the purpose and save the time will do.

To Secure the Memorizing of the golden texts, give to each child a card, on which is the golden text. Do *not* give the text for the *next* lesson, but give the text of the lesson they have *just learned* about. They will be more likely to learn it, because it is about something they have heard. When they enter the school, let them pass on to a second teacher, whose duty it is to hear the texts, and if the child knows the text, the teacher punches the card. This punch says that the lesson was perfect.

Every twelve golden text cards *punched* should entitle the child to a picture card, and for a whole year's texts learned (allowing one text out for each quarter) the child should be entitled to a Bible, or, if it has a Bible, some book suited to the child's capacity. All this work I have just suggested is to be done *before* the child takes his seat in the schoolroom.

The Next Question is, What are we teachers to do who have to be in the church building with all the rest of the school? I know it is very hard to do any work under such circumstances. Let me make a few suggestions.

The first and most necessary thing to do is to shield the class and yourself from the gaze of the school. This can be done in this way. Ask the superintendent

to let you have one corner of the back of the church. Then have a stout pole about seven feet long and fasten it securely against the back of one of the pews, at the end next the aisle. Then stretch a stout wire from one wall to the post, and from there to the other wall. Now get something for a curtain; dark red or dark brown canton flannel is the best. Sew rings along the top of this, and slip them on the wire before it is fastened to the walls.

This makes a nice little room for the class. A curtain made in this way can be pushed back to each wall for all the first services of the school, and when you want the class for the lesson just draw the curtains from the walls to the post, and fasten them with safety pins.

Some People Are Born to Rule. — They have the power of governing within themselves. The people they meet and work with feel it. It is fortunate for the school that has a teacher that has this power to govern; whose look, word, or motion will bring silence. If a teacher cannot keep order in her school, much of her teaching falls to the ground.

The children are quick to see, and can tell by the look of the teacher's face and the tone of her voice if she expects to be obeyed. The law of obedience is the foundation of the order of the school. A look, a motion of the head or hand is all that a teacher ought to need to have perfect attention and obedience. Order is not obtained by noise, or banging a bell, *but by silence*. When the time comes for the opening of the school, let

the teachers stand in silence before the class for a few seconds. The little ones will soon learn that teacher expects them to be quiet, too, and you will be surprised to see how soon a school that has been accustomed to any control at all will become perfectly quiet.

I KNOW A TEACHER who never needed to use a bell or speak a loud word, but when she stood before the class with her book of responsive exercises in her hand the school would become perfectly quiet, and when they could hear the clock tick the teacher would begin in a low, quiet voice to repeat the responsive services, and in the same sweet, reverent tones the school would continue.

The teacher's rule in the school must be loving, gentle, and quiet, but at the same time it must be firm. The teacher must be obeyed. She will have to learn by experience what to do with that bad boy or that unruly girl. The method one teacher can use another cannot use. The treatment that will do with one child will not do with another. You must learn what will do for you in your school by experience.

THERE IS ONE THING that I think will work well in all primary classes. That is a *hospital*. You say, what do you mean? It is a corner of the room, as far from the other children as you can arrange it, where the children that have sick hands, or sick feet, or bad tempers, or noisy tongues are sent to be cared for until they are better. Boys and girls all go to the same hos-

pital. This class is under the care of one teacher whose business it is to see that they are kept perfectly quiet. They are not allowed to take part with the school in any of the exercises. They are not taught anything. They have to stay in this class until they are cured. Sometimes a child will stand it two Sundays, but seldom more, and they do not want to go back to it very soon.

Devotional Exercises. — How shall I begin to talk to you about this? I have seen many things, in so many different schools, that have the name of devotional exercises that to me were far from being devotional. I sat in a church once, waiting to see the working of the school. In a few minutes a door at the other side of the room opened, and in marched a long line of little children, who took their seats on some high chairs in front of the superintendent's desk, and those that could not crowd onto the chairs sat on the cushion at the altar rail. There they sat while the superintendent and older boys and girls went through with all their opening exercises. Not one tune was sung that the little ones knew. The prayer was far above their understanding. How sorry I felt for them. How sorry I was for that worried, anxious teacher. It was twenty minutes wasted.

Now Let Me Tell You what that class might have done with that twenty minutes. First, singing something sweet and devotional that all the children know. Then a short responsive service, then a silent

prayer. (How helpful these silent times are. How they impress on the mind of the child the solemnity of their own service.)

Then the teacher leads the school in prayer, a simple, childlike prayer, such as a child must be taught to pray. Now, with folded hands and bowed heads, the children repeat each sentence after the teacher; then, all together, teachers and scholars say some prayer verses they all know. Now they sing again. Then they say the golden text for that day, all together; then they review the golden texts, not more than four Sundays back. Then they have a short exercise in the books of the Bible, or anything else that the school is learning.

See how much work you could have accomplished in that lost twenty minutes. But you say, what can we do about it? How can we change it? Labor with the superintendent. Show him, if you can, how much better it will be for the class, how much more work can be done, if you could have all the time to yourself.

Don't Ride a Hobby in your school. Above all, don't make the singing a hobby. Too much singing is as bad as too little. I think the practice of showing off the school is a very bad one.

Let me tell you what I heard in one school. After the first singing and prayer, the teacher says, "Now we will have a solo from Mary."

Then, "I wonder if the choir can sing us something."

"Now we will have a duet by Annie and Willie."

"Here is a very little boy that can give us all the texts for the quarter. That is fine; it is worth five cents."

Here the teacher pays the child for saying his part. Then we had half a dozen other things before the lesson was touched. This was an actual fact. This sort of thing is very objectionable. Do not make shows of your schools.

NEVER ASK THE CHILDREN what they want to sing. Such a question as that will bring half the school to its feet, and as many hands waving in the air, and if you let them choose there will be so many different things asked for that you will finally have to select something yourself. The teacher herself must have all this decided before she comes to school.

Always arrange your own program, selecting just what you will sing. Make two lists of this selection, and give one to the organist and keep one yourself. Let it be not only what you will sing, but everything else you wish to do in that one hour and a half. You will find that a properly arranged program will save you much time.

THE TEACHER FINDS a great deal of difficulty in carrying out her plans if she has not the proper helpers. There must always be some one in the school that can sing. If the teacher cannot lead in the singing, then one of the assistants must be selected for that purpose. This qualification is more important than the ability to

play; the school can sing without a piano, but it cannot sing without a voice to lead them. But it is very much better if some one can play also.

Don't let the children shout. Teach them to sing sweetly. Let them feel that there is worship in the singing, as well as in prayers. A verse now and then sung softly has a very quieting effect on the school.

Motion songs are a pleasant change and restful to the children. They make a nice variety in the school; also recitations with motions. The impression of some of them on the mind of the child is good and helpful. What school is there that does not say with reverence: —

Two little eyes to look to God,
Two little ears to hear his word,
Two little feet to walk in his way,
Two hands to work for him all day.

CHAPTER XXI.

PRIMARY CLASS WORK.—CONTINUED.

BY MRS. S. W. CLARK.

THE TEACHER'S TOOLS are many, but the one that can be made the most helpful is the blackboard. She can do more and better work with this than with anything else. Oh, how completely she holds the eyes of her little ones when she stands before the class with the chalk in her hand. How wide open are all the little eye-gates, and while the teacher holds the eye-gates she has the ear-gates. too, for while they are looking they are listening.

IN TALKING TO TEACHERS about their work, and recommending to them the use of the board, the answer five times out of ten will be: "Oh, I can't use the blackboard." If the teacher could only understand the power there is in a blackboard and a piece of chalk, she would never say I *can't ;* rather, she would say *I will* use the blackboard, and if I don't know how, I will learn. Dear teacher, you can use the blackboard if you will only try, and where there is a will there is always a way. I know many of you have a limited amount of means, and you say I *can't* get a blackboard. If you

cannot get an expensive one, let me tell you how to make one that will be better than any one that you can buy.

Get the carpenter to make you a plain board, nicely joined, about three by four and a half feet, or larger, if you wish it; cover this first with four or five layers of newspaper; be sure that the edges exactly meet, and have the paper quite smooth and just the size of the board. Over this put two layers of cheap, unbleached muslin; tack each layer separately, drawing each very tight. Over this put a piece of blackboard cloth; draw it tight and tack it, turning it over the edge, and tacking it on the ends of the board. Then put a narrow beading all around the edges of the board.

This is called a padded board, and is far better to write on than any other. The board can be covered on both sides, if you wish it. If you cover one side, the board can be fastened to the wall, and if you wish a second surface to work on, get a second piece of blackboard cloth, fasten it to a Hartshorn window-shade roller, and have this fastened to the top of your board. It can be drawn up and down the same as a window shade. The blackboard cloth, 36 inches wide, costs $1.25 a linear yard; 48 inches wide, $1.60 a linear yard.

Before you mark on a new board at all it must be primed in this way. Take whole pieces of chalk, and rub the board all over until it is perfectly white, then rub it well in with the hand, then with a piece of soft cloth rub it off. Now with a clean cloth rub it as clean

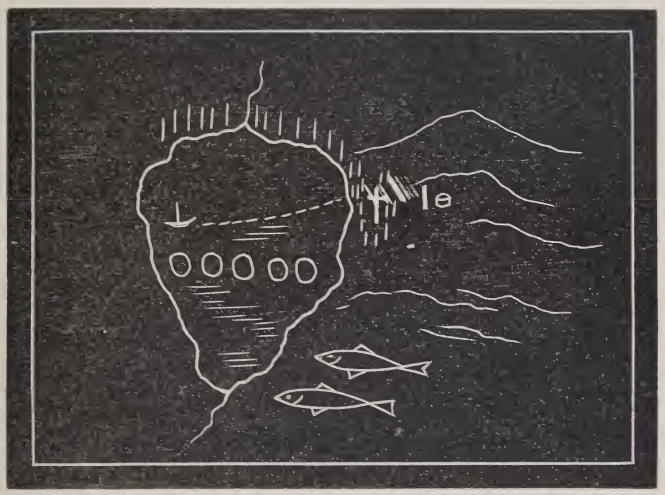
as you can get it. This treatment of the board leaves the surface a little gray, but the writing will be much more easily erased. Never clean the chalk off a board with a wet cloth. Many a board has been ruined by such treatment. If your board gets so bad that you think you must wash it, take a soft cloth and clean water (no soap) and wash a small portion of the board at a time (about one quarter of it), then rub it dry *immediately* with a dry towel. Let the board stand about an hour before writing on it again. You must not write on a board while it is at all damp.

How to Use the Board. — How many times I have been asked that question, and how can I make you understand by telling you that which I feel I ought to show you? When I talk of this matter to teachers the general excuse is: "I am not an artist. I can't draw." If you are not an artist, I am glad of it. We do not want beautiful blackboarding. The simpler the work the better.

Many a little one goes home, and says: "I can make what teacher made on the board to-day." A little boy went home from school a few Sundays ago, saying: "I can make the lesson we had to-day," and he took his slate and pencil, and sat down by mother, and said: "See, mother, this is the sea; I can make it; and Jesus got into a boat right here, and this mark was for Jesus, and he went over here this way, and the people went this way. They wanted to hear what Jesus said, and they stayed all day. See, mamma, this is the little

boy that had the basket of lunch, and here is the basket. This cross was Jesus, and these little straight marks were the disciples. O mamma, there were lots and lots of people there, and they got awful hungry, and there were only five loaves. See, here they are, and this is the way that teacher made the fish, but there were only two of them."

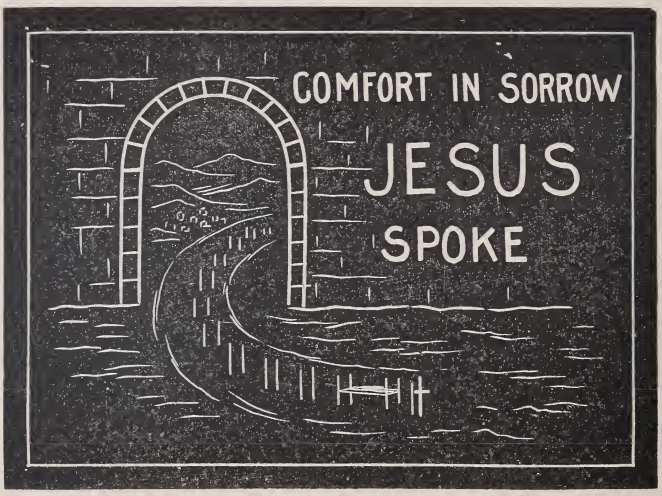
"And was there enough, dear?" asked mamma.



"Yes, mamma; Jesus made it enough, and only think, mamma, a little boy helped."

And after a few minutes' quiet thought, he said: "Mamma, I am going to help Jesus, too. Jesus says he likes little boys to help."

Oh, these sweet lessons, how they draw the children to Christ. The little sketch above is the lesson as remembered by the child.



Who will say I can't use the blackboard when such simple work will do so much good? A few straight lines, a dot, a dash, a few crooked lines can represent anything you wish. The child's imagination will see whatever you wish the marks and lines to represent. A short mark is a man, a few tall crooked marks is a tree, a few lines across the board is a road, a lot of little marks is a crowd of people.

In teaching the lesson of the widow's son being raised, these few lines make the story very clear to the child. How much they add to the teacher's word picture. Eyes and ears are both held while you fill the little heart with the sweet story of Jesus' loving sympathy.

The gateway in the wall of the city of Nain. The funeral procession going out to bury the dead.

There is not a lesson that is selected for our teaching

in which we cannot use the board in teaching it, if not in picture, then in words.

But You Say the Children Can't Read. — Then we must put the work on the board in such a way that they will understand what it means if they cannot read it. For names make initial letters with bright-colored crayons. For long words make long dashes of different colors, only writing out such short words as can be read. Always print out in full JESUS, GOD, LOVE. These have to be used so often that the children will soon learn them. A heart, a cross, a crown are little word pictures, and can be used in many of our lessons. If you wish to put some of the work on the board before the time for the lesson, always cover it with black tissue paper, and have it so arranged that you can uncover just what you want to show next. If the children see all the blackboard work at once before you have taught the lesson, they soon lose interest, and you lose their attention. I would advise the teacher, as far as you possibly can, to use the chalk while you talk. Let the children see you do the work. Let them count or speak the letters as you print them; this keeps them busy.

Maps. — It is better for the teacher of the primary class to make her own maps. If she has not blackboard room enough to spare for this purpose, get a piece of manilla paper, and with colored chalks make an outline map, and make the different mountains, rivers, cities,

and journeys as she comes to them in the lesson. This can easily be replaced with a new piece of paper for any other course of lessons. The teacher will find objects and pictures very helpful in gaining the attention of the class, but be sure and put the object out of sight after it has served its purpose. By so doing the child's attention will be turned from the object to the lesson itself.

How to Teach the Words of our hymns is a question that is often asked and puzzles many teachers. The custom of repeating the words of a song, line by line, and having the class repeat it after you, is the only method that many teachers know of, and is not a good way. There are many better methods. Some write the words on the board and help the children to read from the board. Some write them on manilla paper, and hang it on the wall, and sing from it until they know the words.

The best plan that I know of is to print the words on paper and give them to the child to be learned at home. On the same paper print a little note to mother, asking her to see that the little ones learn the verses before the next Sunday. In the same note invite her to come and see the school. I know a teacher who uses this method, and the children are always ready with the words when she wants to teach the music. The very fact of the mother teaching the words to her little child creates an interest in the heart of the mother and will often bring her to see the school. The Simplex Printer can be

used for this work, is very reasonable in price, and does good work.

The Preparation of the Lesson. — I am sorry to have to reveal to you a secret which I have discovered by coming in contact with many teachers. It is this. Many teachers do not prepare. Not long ago I was in a school of about one hundred scholars where the teacher evidently knew nothing about the lesson, only the hints she got from the picture of the leaf cluster. All she seemed to have to say was that those wicked men were going to push Jesus off those rocks, and was it not a shame, and would they do such a thing? She had made no preparation, and so she had little or nothing to say.

Many Times when I have asked the question (even as late as Thursday in the week), Where is the lesson? or, What is it about? comparatively few could answer either question. Too many teachers do not realize the need of this preparation. Some do not even look at the lesson until Saturday or even Sunday morning. How can they expect to teach? They can tell just what they read, but can they teach anything? Teaching implies much knowledge on the part of the teacher. How can you teach God's word if you do not know it? How can you know it if you do not study it?

Look Ahead. — See where the lessons are, what they are about, what the text is. Get a general idea of the lesson plan for the month or quarter. This will help you in planning your lesson work; you will have some idea

of what you can use, and so be able to pick up illustrations, pictures, objects for future use.

Begin the preparation of your lesson on Sunday, after you are rested a little from the fatigue of the afternoon's work, while your mind is still active and busy with the last lesson. Take up the Bible and read the next lesson, thus connecting another car to the train of lessons. Read carefully, slowly, two or three times. Read the verses before and after the selected lesson. Now let it rest; you are too tired to do any more now, but the seed is sown, and the lesson will grow as the days go by. Water this little seed with much prayer, and see how soon the lesson will spring up.

To Help this Growth we must study the lesson surroundings. The places and people of the lesson, the manners and customs of the people, the teachings of the lesson. As you go about your every-day duties, keep your eyes open for illustrations, things you hear and see in the street, objects or pictures you may see, anything and everything that will help to illustrate. Do not be satisfied with just a little study and think that that will do for a child. The little ones seem to know by instinct whether you really know the lesson or not. Find out everything you can about the lesson, fill your heart full; then when you come before your class you will not lack for words. While you are doing this studying one of the thoughts must be, How can I present this to the little ones so that they will understand it? Here the blackboard will be your best help.

The Assistant Teacher has many and varied duties in the school. She ought to be punctual and regular in her attendance. Each assistant ought to have her own appointed duty and her own place in the school-room. Some have the duties at the door to attend to; others have to see that the children are seated right and have their outer garments removed, and to keep the little ones reasonably quiet. Perfect quiet is not needed until the opening of the school. The assistant must have her own place among the children while the lesson is being taught. If she has to move about or speak to a child, do it just as quietly as possible. Some assistants make more noise than the children do, trying to keep order.

There ought to be no occasion for the assistant to move or speak during the lesson time; the teacher's teaching power ought to hold her class in order. I know a teacher whose assistants never moved or spoke to the children while she was teaching the lesson. If the little ones became restless, she just stopped and was silent a minute. This soon brought all eyes to her, and then she continued the lesson. It is the duty of the assistants to see that the children are ready to go home, to be at the door with the papers and cards. Let this be attended to at the door, not all over the room. The teacher herself wants her time here to speak to mothers and visitors.

These Visitors Are Sometimes a great trouble to the teacher. She wishes with all her heart that they

would not come to her room. She does not like to teach before them. Some teachers stop their work and go to singing when any one comes in. This is very bad, both for herself and the school. She must learn to be brave and go on with the lesson. Let one of the assistants seat visitors at the back of the room where the children will not see them. Never invite a visitor to the platform, or give them seats in front of the school. A visitor's gallery is a very nice thing if you can have it; if not, have reserved seats at the back of the room for parents and visitors. Do not invite visitors generally to speak to the school. If the pastor or superintendent comes in, let them sit at the back of the room until the lesson is over, then invite them to speak to the school. The children ought to see and know them, and they ought to know the children. A word or two from the pastor is always helpful and pleasant.

Review, Review, Review. — This is the only way to really fasten your teaching. Go over the work at the close of the lesson. Begin the next lesson with a review of the last. Do not tell them, but make them tell you what the last lesson was. The words on the board, the picture, the text, the teachings of the lesson. If the children cannot tell you anything about the lesson, you may be sure you have not taught them anything. If they cannot give back to you that which you have tried to give to them, then they have not really learned anything. This is the only way the teacher can test her work. In asking the questions in a review, do not

ask them in such a way that the answers can be just yes and no, ma'am. Help the children to think and find the answer in their own minds. Review plans are a very necessary help.

On the second side of the board, or on a piece of paper, have some design in which to put some part of each lesson. A window with twelve panes of glass, one pane for each lesson. A ladder with twelve rounds. A book with twelve leaves, turning one each Sunday. This can be made of paper. Any design that will serve the purpose will do. But I say again, review.

WHICH IS THE BEST, subdivided or undivided classes? Which of these is best depends largely on the size of the school and the qualification and ability of the teacher to hold the class. Some teachers can hold a hundred scholars without any trouble; others find it is all they can do to hold thirty, or forty, or even twenty. The material you have to work with must decide what you will do with the school. Very large schools, say one hundred and fifty to three hundred scholars, will do better work as divided schools. Have one teacher for every ten scholars, a circle of chairs and a little stand for each class. The subdivided school ought to be graded. Children up to five years in the lower grade, up to seven in the second, to nine in the advanced grade. This will be the graduating class and must be prepared for entering the other school.

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR promotion are: The Lord's

Prayer, Ten Commandments, Twenty-third Psalm, Beatitudes, and the Books of the Bible. In this grade the children must be taught how to handle the Bible; that is, how to find the different books, chapters, and verses quickly. The duties in the other grades are: to keep the roll, collect the pennies, hear the texts, and to teach them where they are not known, teach the words of the new hymns, or any other exercises that the superintendent wants to put into the school. Keep order while the superintendent is teaching the lesson, distribute papers and cards in your own class at the close of the school. In the divided school there ought to be a receiving class, in which all new scholars are placed until they can be assigned to a regular class.

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